



THORGAL

The Three Elders of Aran

ROSINSKI - VAN HAMME

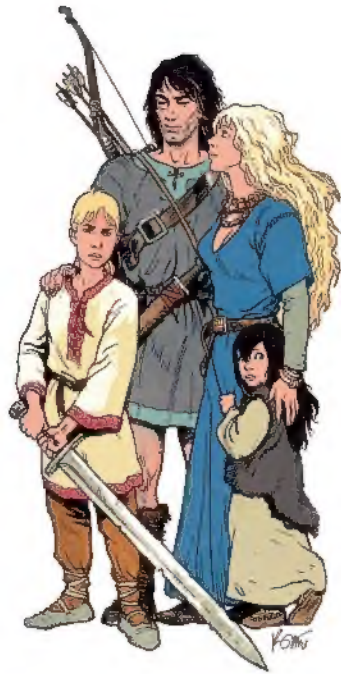


ROSINSKI-VAN HAMME

THORNGAL

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Original titles: Thorgal 3/Les 3 vieillards du pays d'Aran - 4/La galère noire

Original edition: © Rosinski & Van Hamme, 1981-1982, LES EDITIONS DU LOMBARD
(DARGAUD-LOMBARD),
www.lelombard.com

English translation: © 2007 Cinebook Ltd

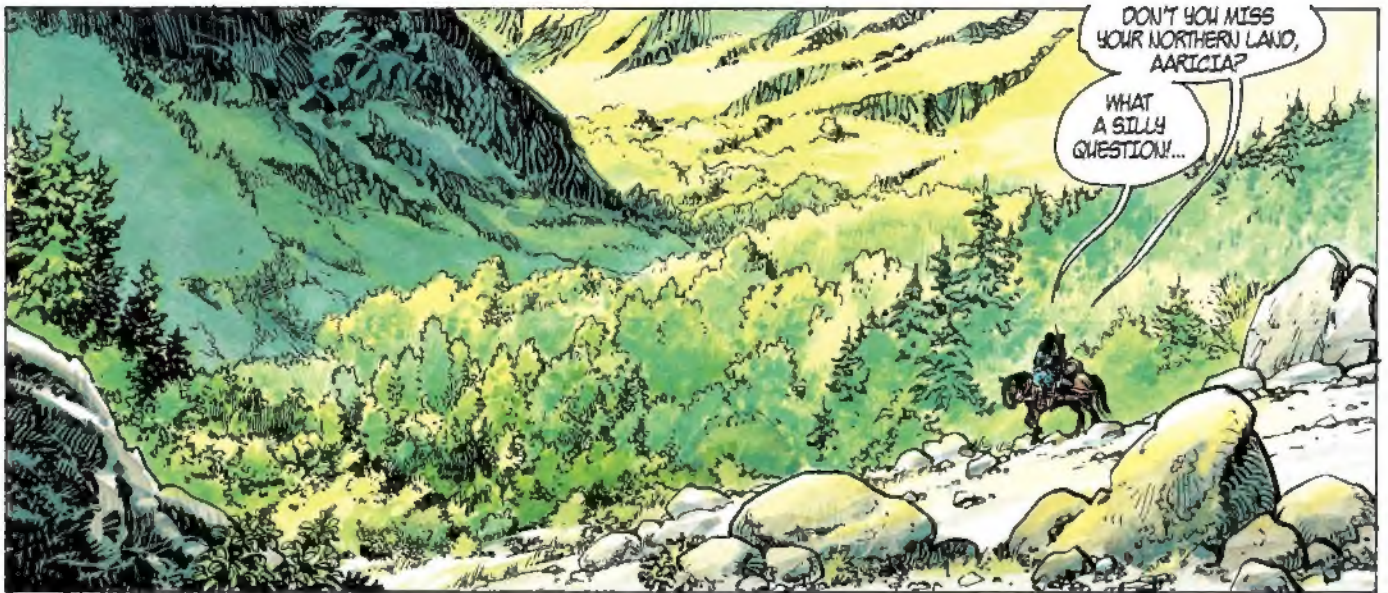
Translator: Luke Spear
Lettering and Text layout: Imadjinn sarl
Printed in Spain by Just colour Graphic

This edition first published in Great Britain in 2007 by
CINEBOOK Ltd
PO Box 293, 18 John Dutton Way
Ashford, Kent
TN23 9AD
www.cinebook.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library

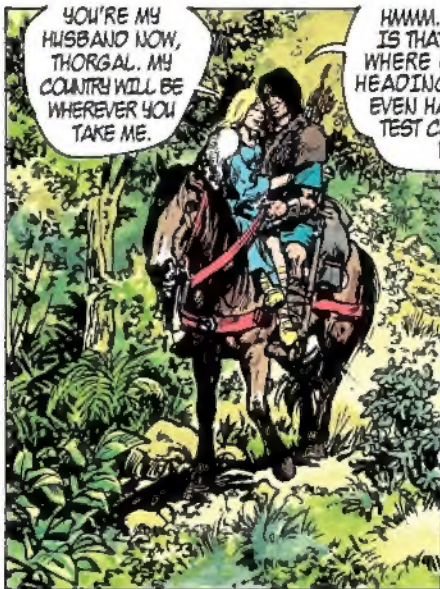
ISBN 978-1-905460-31-1

 **CINEBOOK**
The 9th Art Publisher



DON'T YOU MISS YOUR NORTHERN LAND, AARTICIA?

WHAT A SILLY QUESTION!...



YOU'RE MY HUSBAND NOW, THORGAL. MY COUNTRY WILL BE WHEREVER YOU TAKE ME.

HMMM... THE PROBLEM IS THAT I DON'T KNOW WHERE OR WHAT WE'RE HEADING FOR... I DON'T EVEN HAVE THE SLIGHTEST CLUE WHERE WE ARE.



BAH, WHAT DOES IT MATTER! WE'RE FREE, MY LOVE. FREE TO TRAVEL, TO DISCOVER THE WORLD... TOGETHER, WE'LL BE SAFE WHEREVER WE ARE.

WELL, APART FROM THE WOLVES, BEARS, BOARS, ROGUES, BANDITS AND SAVAGE MOUNTAIN TRIBES, YOU'RE RIGHT. WE'RE COMPLETELY SAFE.



YOU'RE JUST SAYING THAT TO SCARE ME. BUT WITH YOU, I'M NOT SCARED OF ANYTHING...



BRAVO! THERE'S A BRAVE YOUNG PERSON!

AAAAGH!

?!?



WHO ARE YOU? WHERE ARE YOU HIDING? SHOW YOURSELF!

HAHAHA! PUT YOUR SWORD AWAY, GREAT LORD!... I COULDN'T DO YOU ANY HARM. WAIT...



POWERFUL LORD AND BEAUTIFUL LADY, WELCOME TO THE LAND OF ARAN. MY NAME IS JADAWIN. I HAVE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.



YOU WERE EXPECTING US? WHY?...

TO TAKE YOU TO OUR FEAST, OF COURSE.



A FEAST? WHAT A GOOD IDEA! LET'S GO NOW, THORGAL!

HMM... I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT. I WOULD PREFER TO CONTINUE ON OUR WAY...

WE HAVE ENOUGH TIME, DON'T WE?... I REALLY LIKE FEASTS!



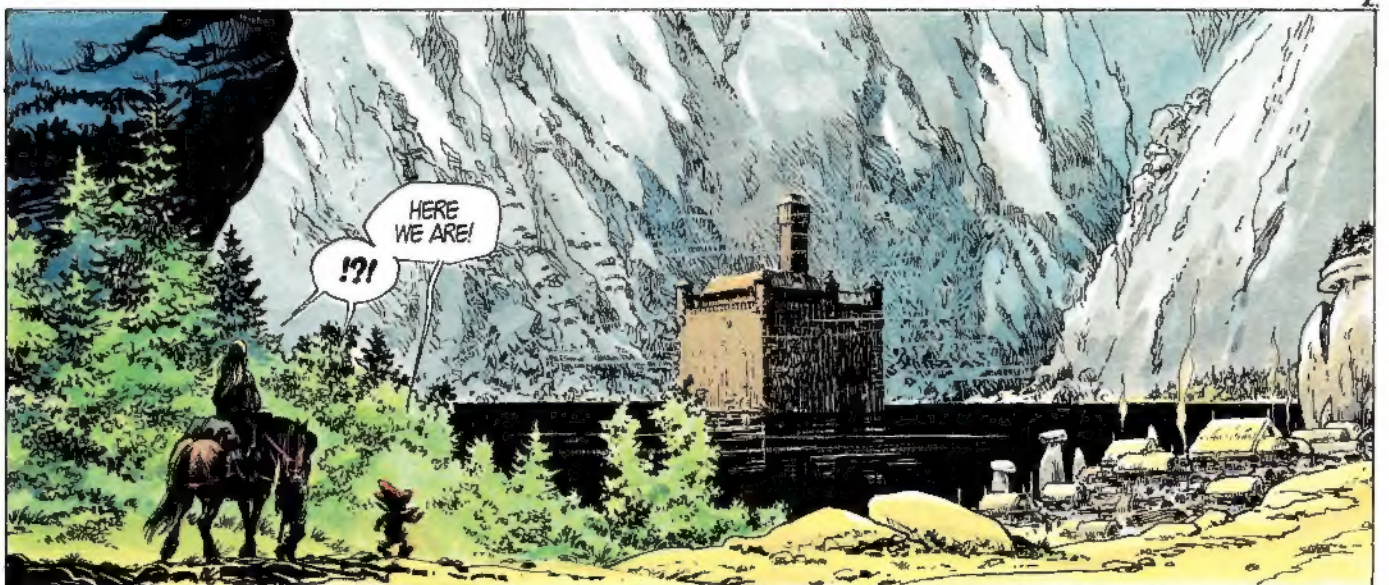
YEEEAH... WELL, ALL RIGHT. AND WE COULD ALWAYS LODGE THERE.

EXCELLENT, EXCELLENT! QUICKLY, FOLLOW ME!



IS THE LAND OF ARAN OF WHICH YOU SPEAK VERY FAR?

JUST THE OTHER SIDE OF THESE WOODS, LORD. JUST THE OTHER SIDE.



HERE WE ARE!

!?!



ARE YOU SURE THAT THIS IS A FEAST, JADAWIN? IN WHOSE HONOUR ARE THESE... CELEBRATIONS TAKING PLACE?

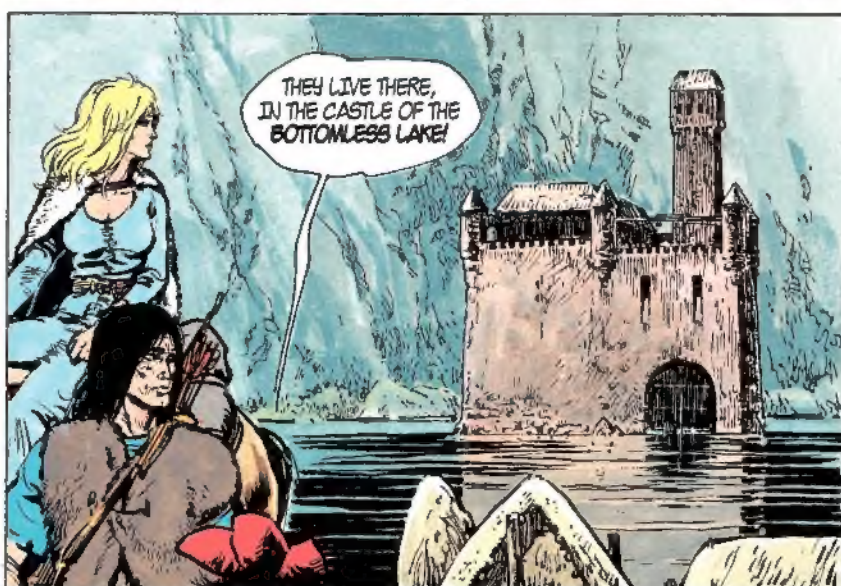


I DON'T KNOW, LORD THORGAL, I DON'T KNOW... THE BENEVOLENT ONES ORDERED IT.



STOP CALLING ME "LORD," I'M NOT ONE... WHO ARE THE BENEVOLENT ONES?

THOSE WHO GUIDE THE DESTINY OF THE LANDS OF ARAN AND WATCH OVER THE HAPPINESS OF THEIR PEOPLE...



THEY LIVE THERE, IN THE CASTLE OF THE BOTTOMLESS LAKE!



A BOTTOMLESS LAKE, A JOYLESS FEAST AND MYSTERIOUS "BENEVOLENT ONES"... I'M WONDERING IF WE MADE THE RIGHT...

OH LOOK, THORGAL!



WHAT IS IT? LOOKS LIKE A MAGNIFICENT NECKLACE.

THAT IT IS, NOBLE LADY, MADE OF THE FINEST VERMIL SILVER. LEGEND HAS IT THAT IT BELONGED TO THEAZI, MOTHER OF ALL FOREST ELVES.



AND WHO HUNG IT LIKE THAT?

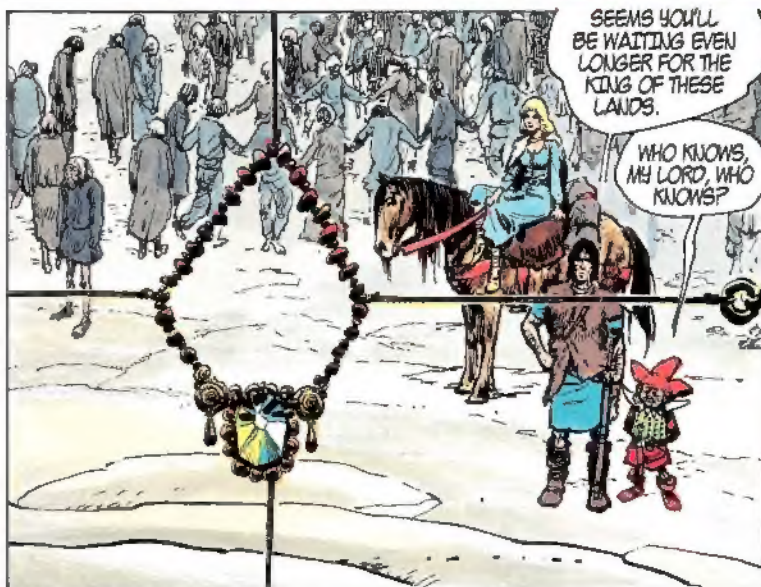
I DON'T KNOW... IT WAITS THERE TILL THE PROPHECY IS FULFILLED.

THE PROPHECY... WHAT PROPHECY?

THE ANCIENT RUIN PROPHECY: HE WHO FREES THEAZI'S NECKLACE WITH JUST ONE ARROW WILL REIGN OVER THE LANDS OF ARAN.

AN ARCHER AS ABLE AS YOU SHOULD TRY HIS LUCK, LORD THORGAL.

DON'T TALK NON-SENSE, JADAWIN. CUTTING THOSE FOUR LINES WITH ONE ARROW IS IMPOSSIBLE.



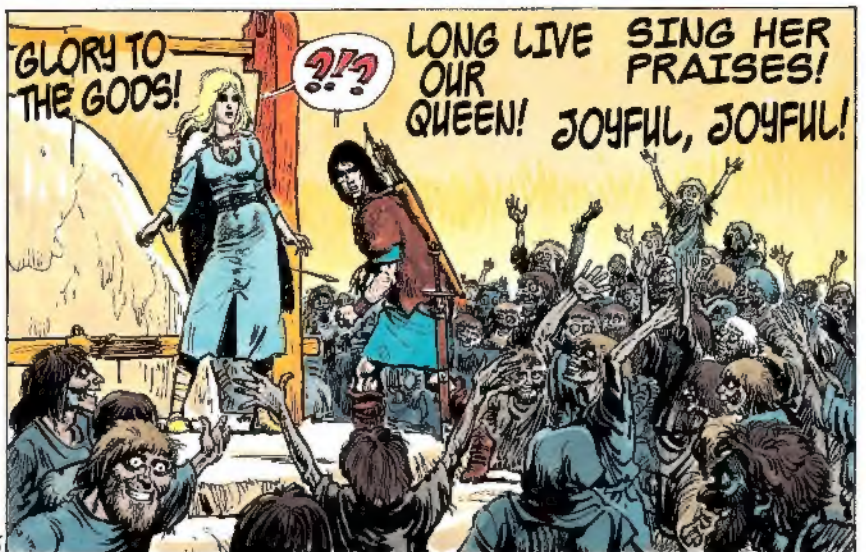
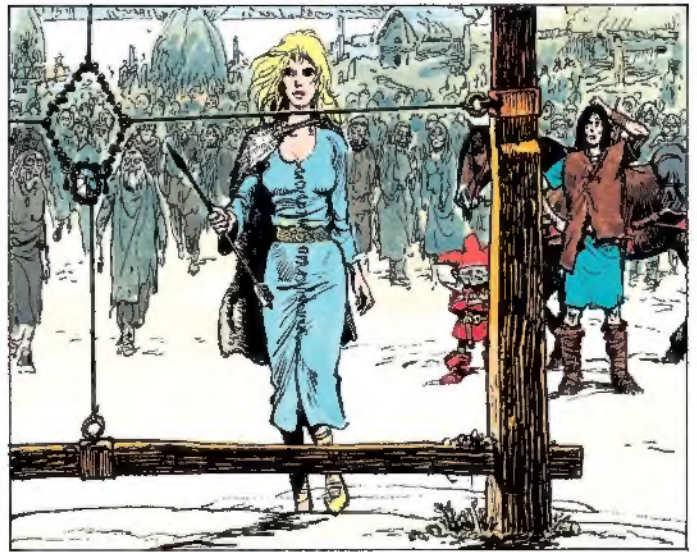
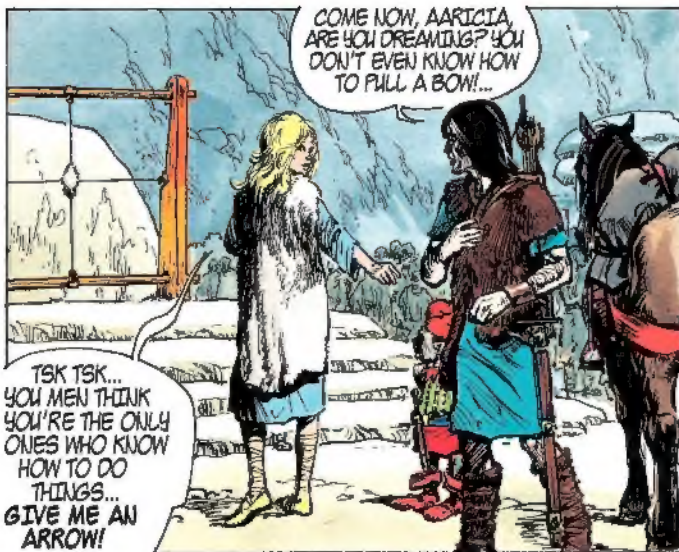
SEEMS YOU'LL BE WAITING EVEN LONGER FOR THE KING OF THESE LANDS.

WHO KNOWS, MY LORD, WHO KNOWS?

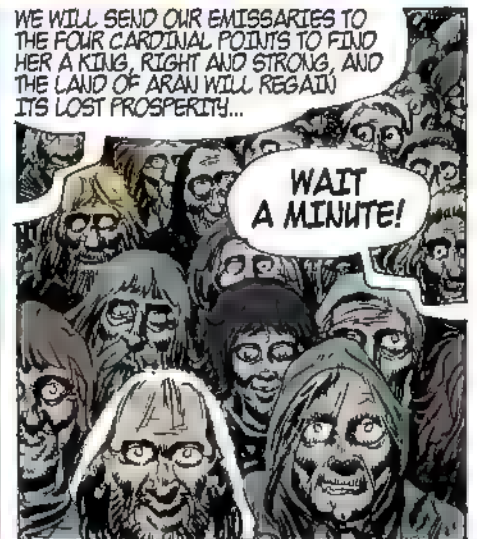


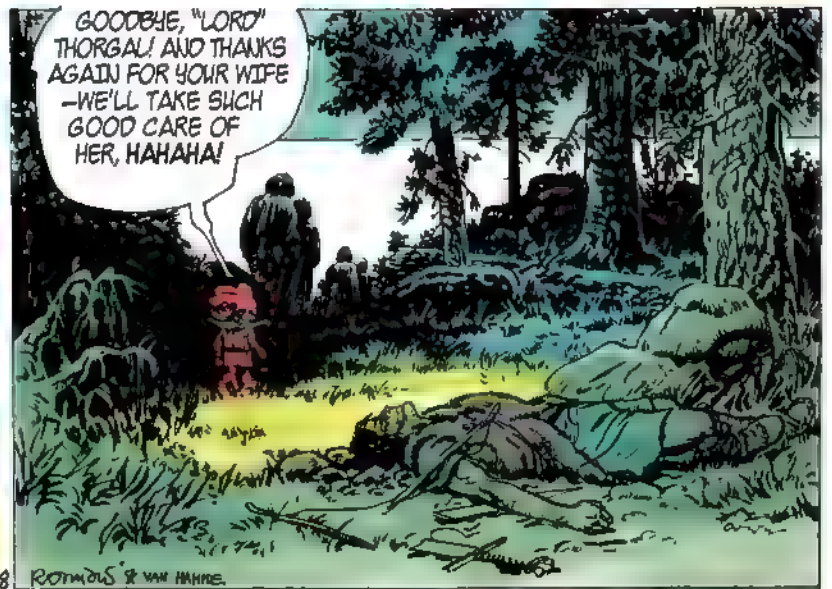
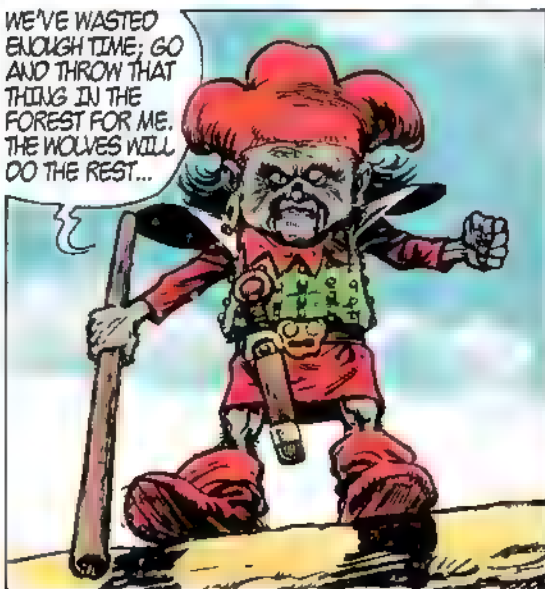
WELL, I LIKE THAT NECKLACE!... I'M GOING TO TRY MY LUCK!

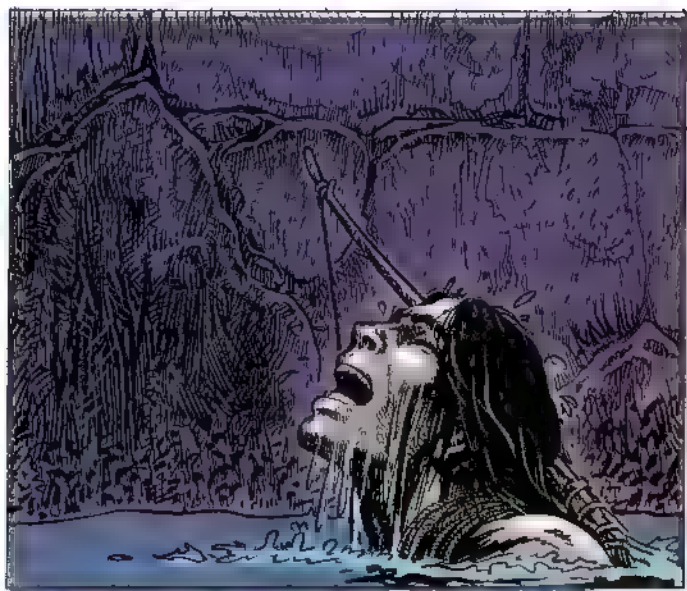
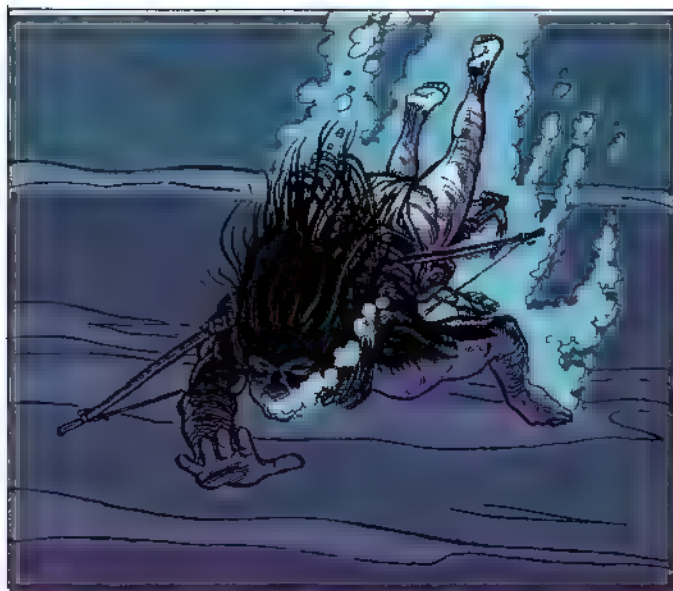
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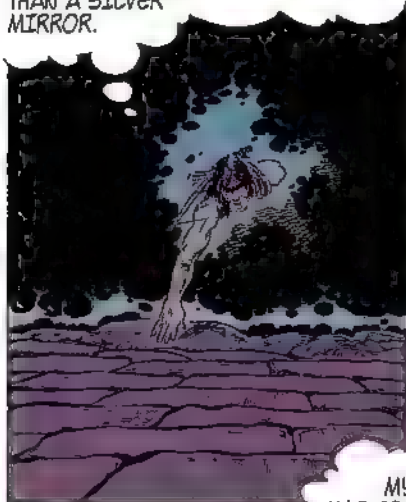




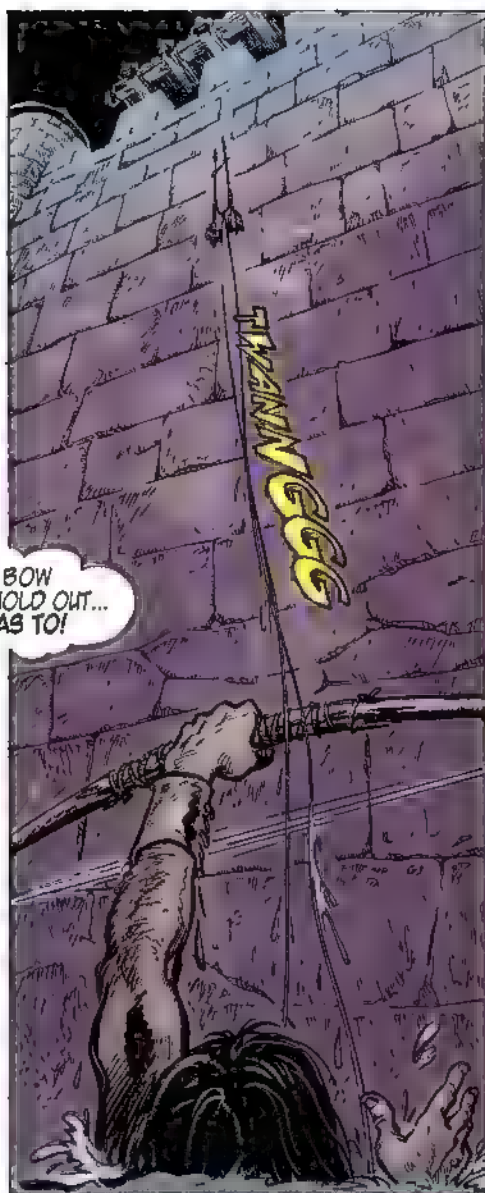
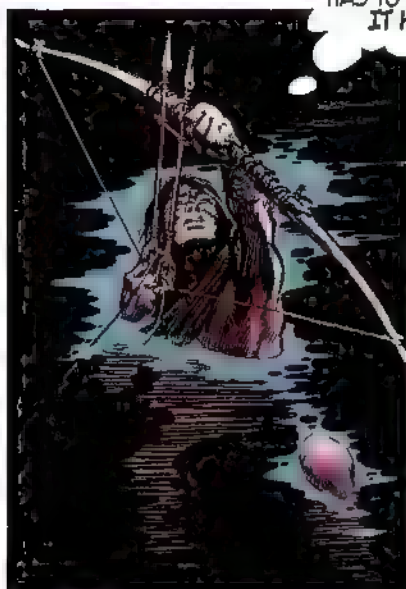




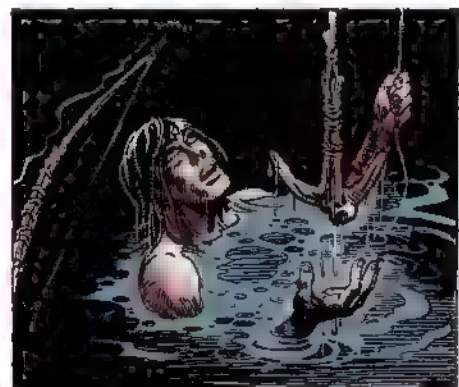
IT'S AS I FEARED: NO WINDOW,
NO FOOTHOLDS... THE WALLS OF THIS
STRANGE CASTLE ARE SMOOTHER
THAN A SILVER
MIRROR.



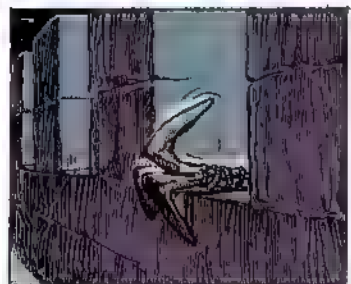
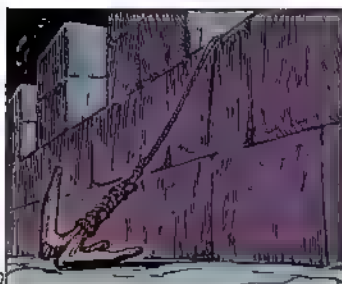
MY BOW
HAS TO HOLD OUT...
IT HAS TO!

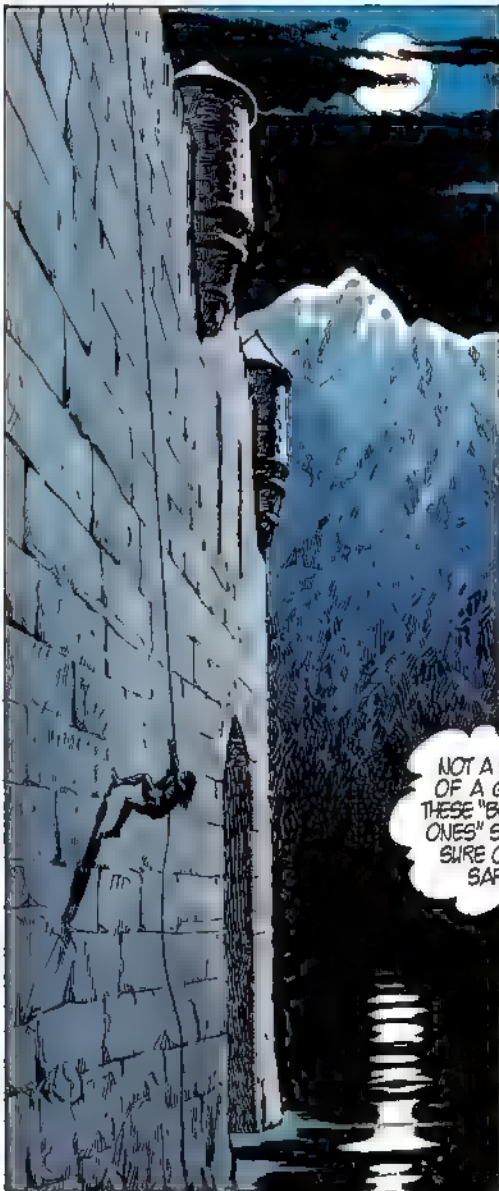


GOT IT! NOW
FOR THE GRAP-
PLING HOOK!



IT WORKED.
NOW TO GIVE IT A
GOOD TUG...





NOT A SHADOW
OF A GUARD...
THESE "BENEVOLENT
ONES" SEEM VERY
SURE OF THEIR
SAFETY...



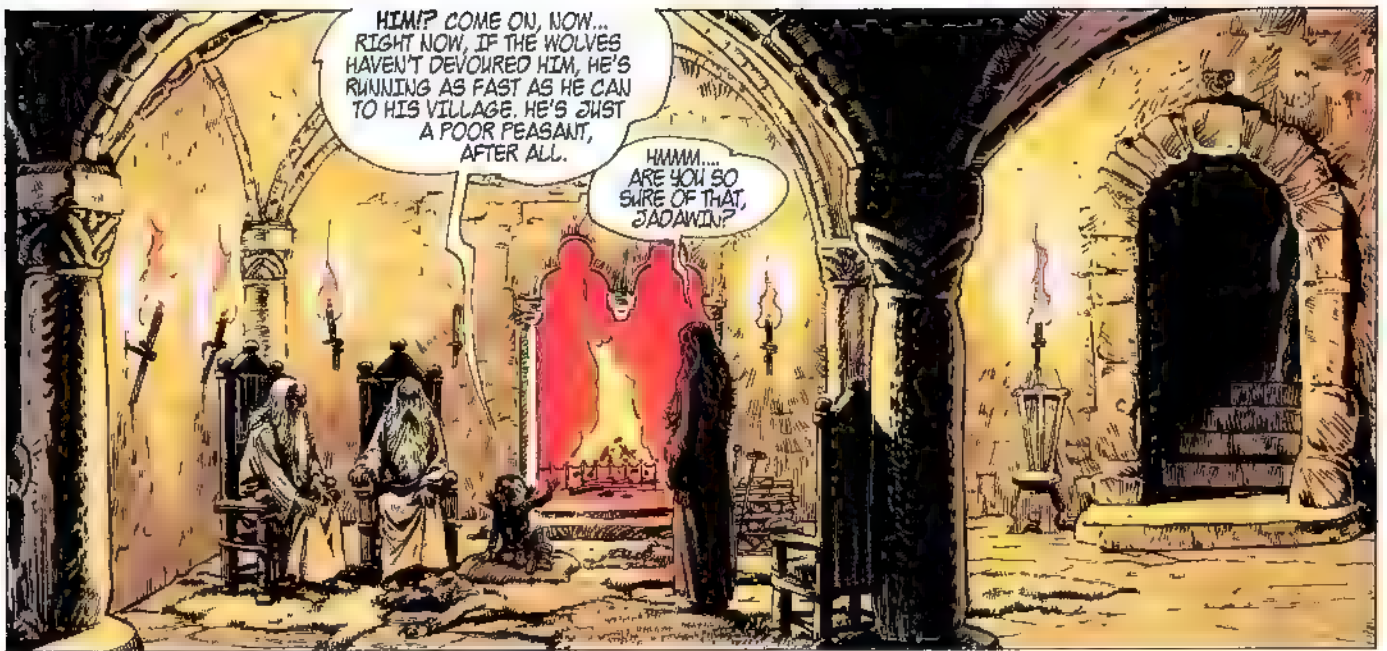
WHICH THEY
ARE REALLY
QUITE WRONG
ABOUT.



LIGHT AND... YES,
IT MUST BE, SOUNDS
LIKE A VOICE...



MIGHTN'T
THIS THORGAL
FELLOW THWART
OUR PLANS,
JADAWIN?



HIM? COME ON, NOW...
RIGHT NOW, IF THE WOLVES
HAVEN'T DEVOURD HIM, HE'S
RUNNING AS FAST AS HE CAN
TO HIS VILLAGE. HE'S JUST
A POOR PEASANT,
AFTER ALL.

HMMM...
ARE YOU SO
SURE OF THAT,
JADAWIN?

HE COMES FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRY. THERE
ARE NO PEASANTS THERE, NOTHING BUT VIKINGS
AND A FEW WILD MOUNTAIN DWELLERS. NOW THIS
THORGAL IS CLEARLY NEITHER OF THOSE. SO WHAT
IS HE, REALLY?



BAH, WHAT
DOES IT MATTER...
HE CAN'T DO ANYTHING
TO US. HAVE ALL OF
THE MESSENGERS
LEFT, JADAWIN?

A FEW HOURS AGO,
MASTER.

AND THEY
ALL UNDERSTOOD
WHAT THEY ARE TO
SAID?



THEY WILL GO AROUND PROCLAIMING THAT OUR
NEW QUEEN IS LOOKING FOR A NOBLE AND
VALIANT LORD TO MARRY, THAT SHE IS BEAUTIFUL
LIKE THE SUMMER AND ESPECIALLY THAT HER
COFFERS OVERFLOW WITH GOLD. DON'T WORRY,
MASTERS, THERE WILL BE PLENTY
OF SUITORS.



LET US HOPE SO, JADAWIN.
TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE,
AS YOU KNOW.

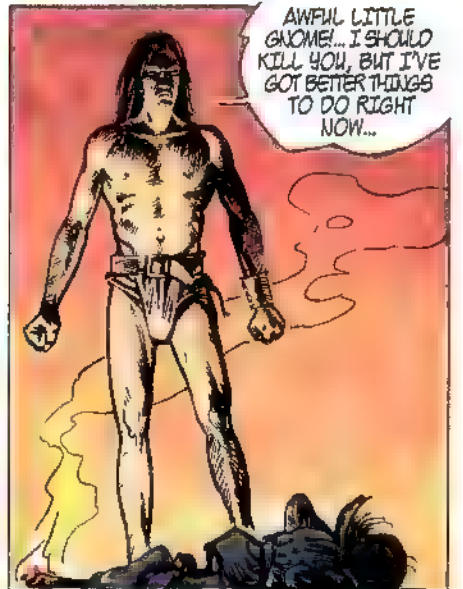
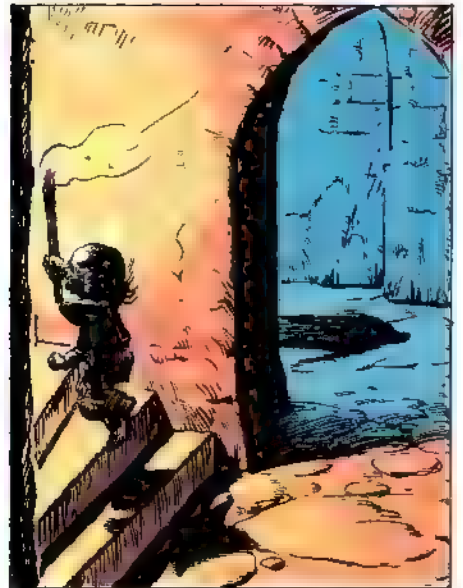


FROM TOMORROW
WE'LL ORDER THE
VILLAGERS TO PREPARE
EVERYTHING FOR THE
TRIAL OF HONOUR
CEREMONIES.

BEFORE GOING
TO BED, I'LL GO AND
SEE IF OUR LITTLE
SWEETHEART IS SLEEPING
PEACEFULLY.

EXCELLENT IDEA.
SEE YOU TOMORROW,
JADAWIN.





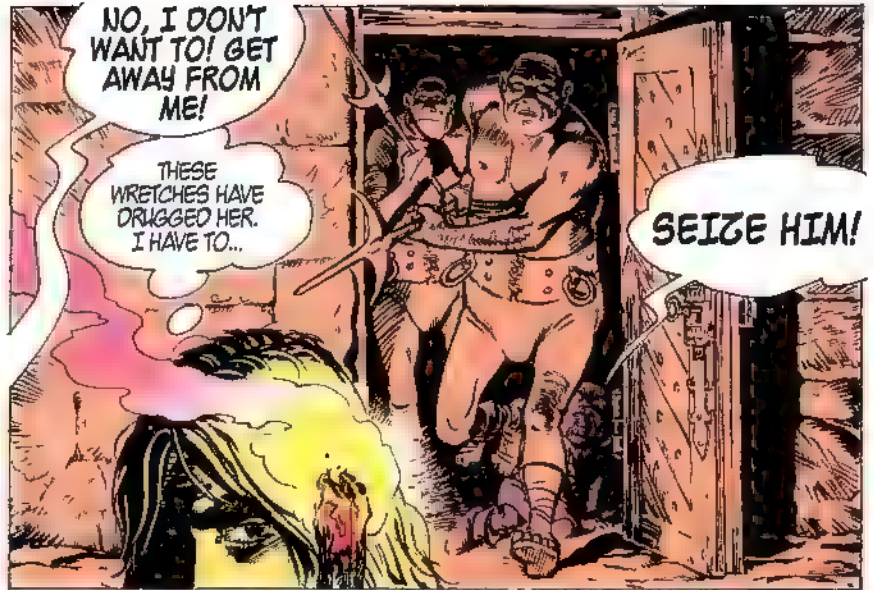
WHO ARE YOU!?
GET OUT! LEAVE
ME ALONE!!

WHAT!? ... AARICIA,
IT'S ME, THORGAL...



NO, I DON'T
WANT TO! GET
AWAY FROM
ME!

THESE
WRETCHES HAVE
DRUGGED HER.
I HAVE TO...



SEIZE HIM!



I THOUGHT
THERE WAS
SOMETHING
MISSING...

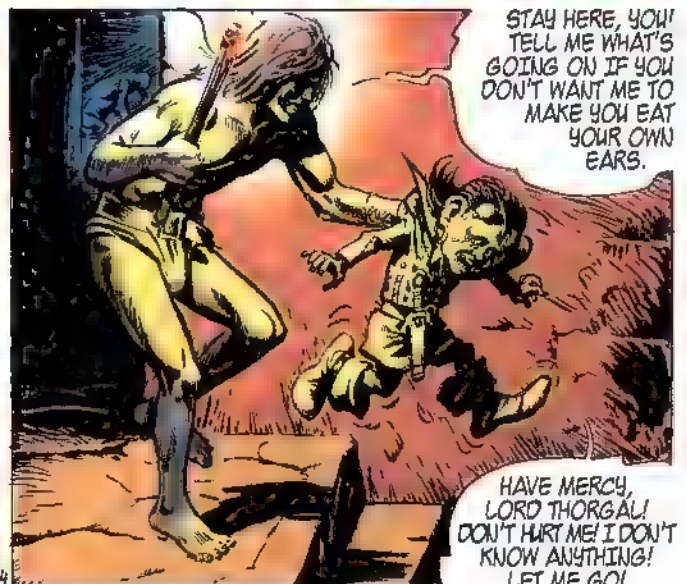
KILL HIM!
KILL THIS
SACRILEGIOUS
MAN WHO
DARES DEFEY THE
BENEVOLENT ONES!



TAKE THIS,
PUPPET!

USELESS
BRUTES!
STOP
HIM!

BE PATIENT,
JADAWIN:
YOU'RE NEXT...

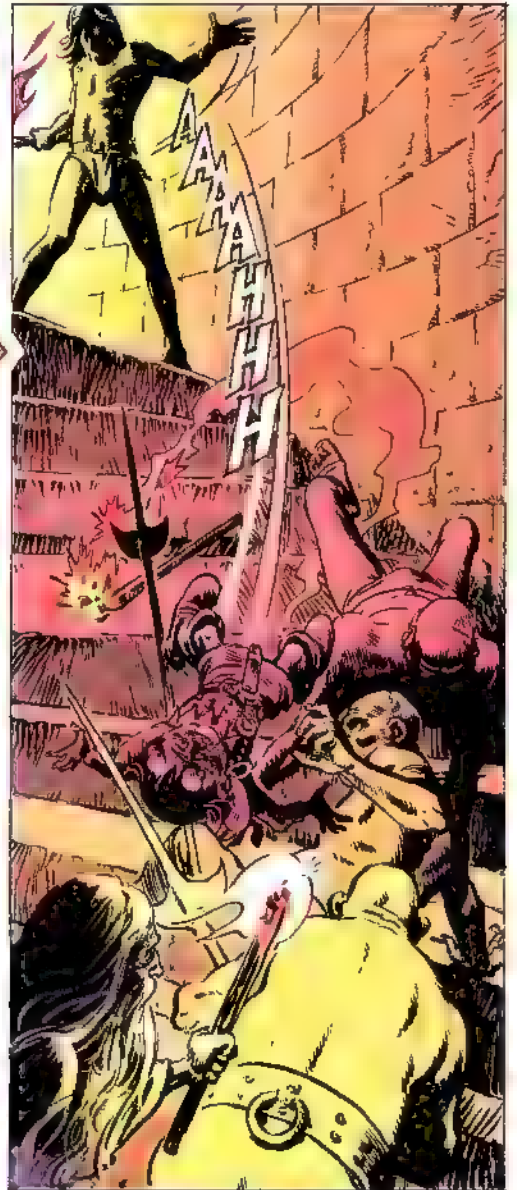


STAY HERE, YOU!
TELL ME WHAT'S
GOING ON IF YOU
DON'T WANT ME TO
MAKE YOU EAT
YOUR OWN
EARS.

HAVE MERCY,
LORD THORGAL!
DON'T HURT ME! I DON'T
KNOW ANYTHING!
LET ME GO!



MORE!?



THIS TIME, LET
ODIN COME
TO MY AID!

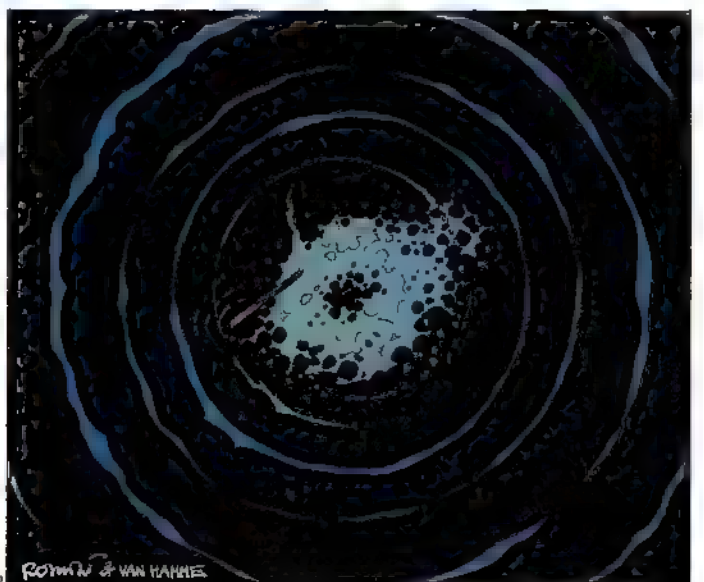




THERE'S OUR
PROBLEM SOLVED,
HEHEHE!... NO MAN
GETS OUT OF THE
BOTTOMLESS LAKE
ALIVE!



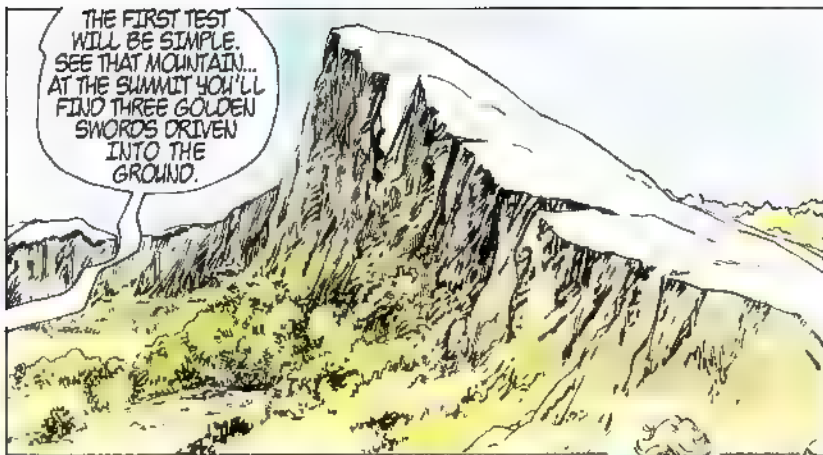
NO ORDINARY
MAN. BUT IS
THIS THORGAL AN
ORDINARY MAN?



ROTHMAN & VAN HANDEL

A SHORT WHILE LATER...

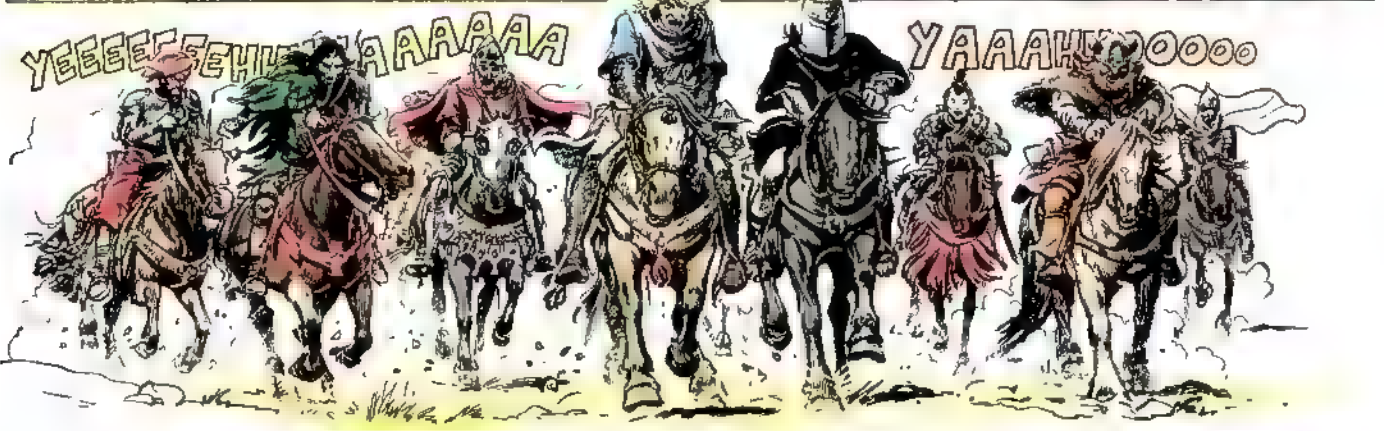




THE FIRST TEST
WILL BE SIMPLE.
SEE THAT MOUNTAIN...
AT THE SUMMIT YOU'LL
FIND THREE GOLDEN
SWORDS DRIVEN
INTO THE GROUND.



THE THREE OF YOU WHO EACH
BRING A SWORD BACK TO
US WILL HAVE WON THE RIGHT
TO CONTINUE THE TESTS.
THE OTHERS WILL BE
ELIMINATED. GO!



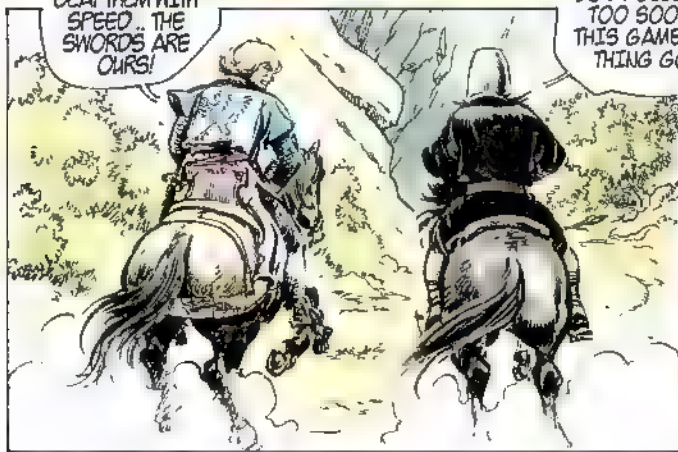
YEEEEEEHHHHHHHHHHH

YAAAAHHHHHHHHH

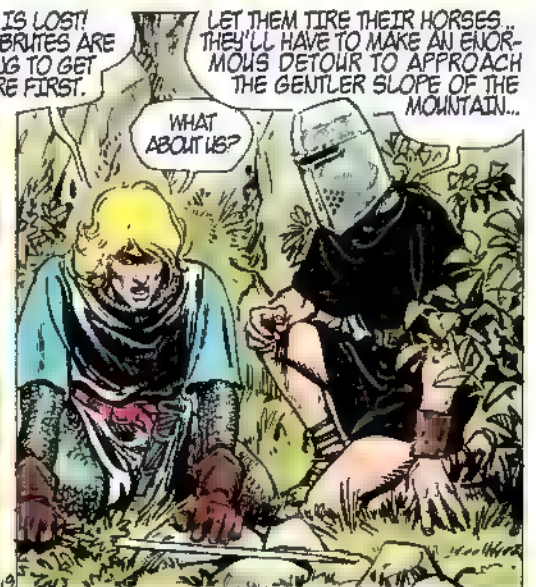
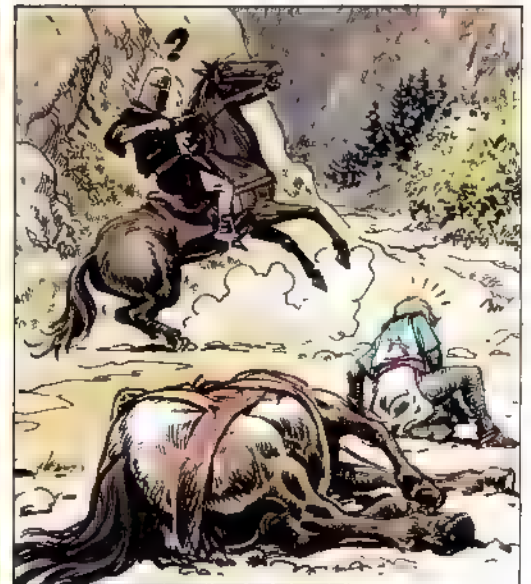


HAAH! WE'LL
BEAT THEM WITH
SPEED... THE
SWORDS ARE
OURS!

DON'T CELEBRATE
TOO SOON. IN
THIS GAME, ANY-
THING GOES.



18





US?
WE'LL TAKE
THE SHORTEST
ROUTE.

?



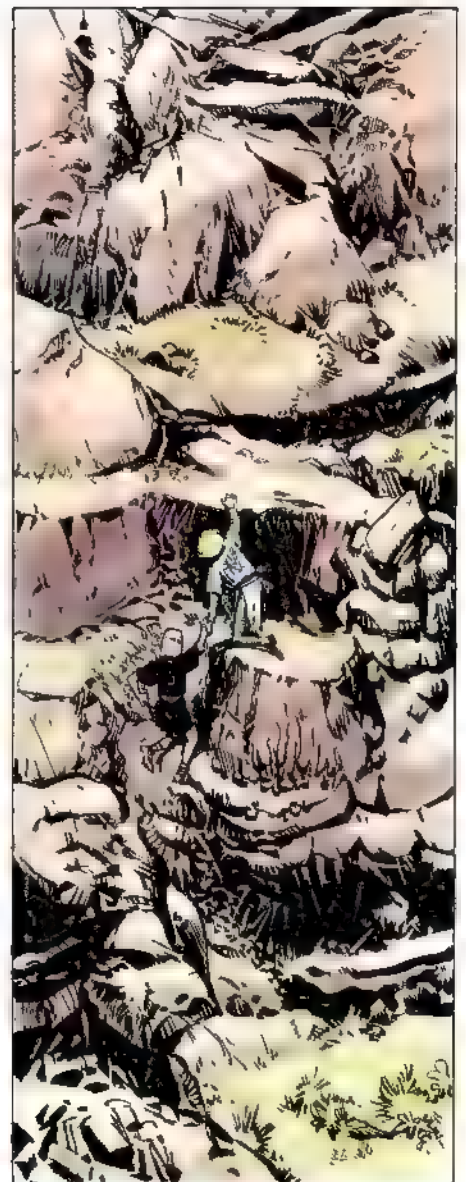
THE SHORTEST
ROUTE, EHP...

YOU'LL SEE. BY
HELPING EACH OTHER
INSTEAD OF FIGHTING, A
LOT OF OBSTACLES BECOME
EASIER TO OVERCOME.
AND NOW, HIDE YOUR
SWORD IN THE BUSHES;
IT'LL WEIGH US
DOWN.



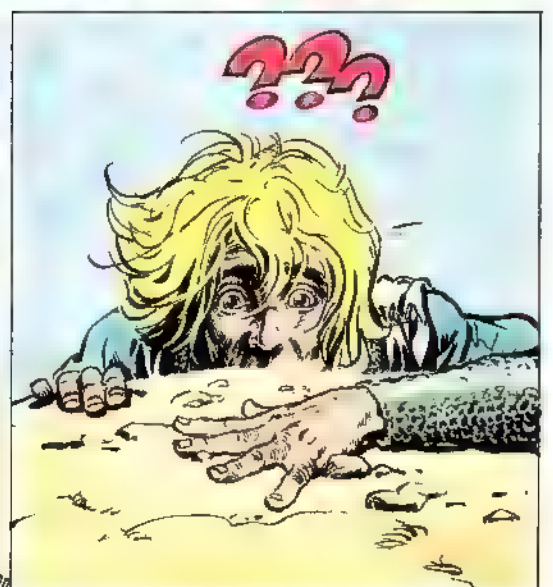
VERY WELL, UNKNOWN LORD... I DON'T
KNOW IF YOU ARE THE CRAZIEST OR
THE WISEST OF US, BUT I'LL FOLLOW
YOU. MY NAME IS SIGURD.

COME ON
THEN, SIGURD,
NO TIME TO
LOSE.

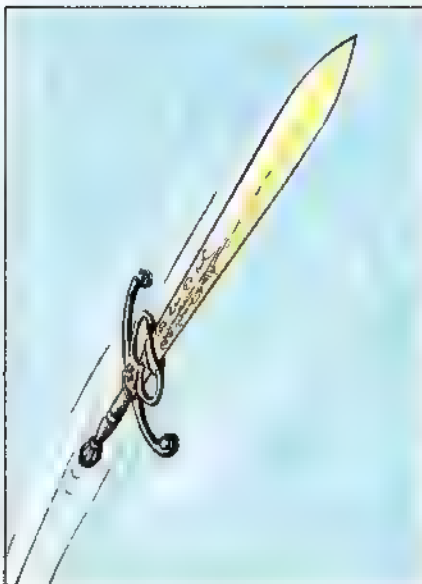
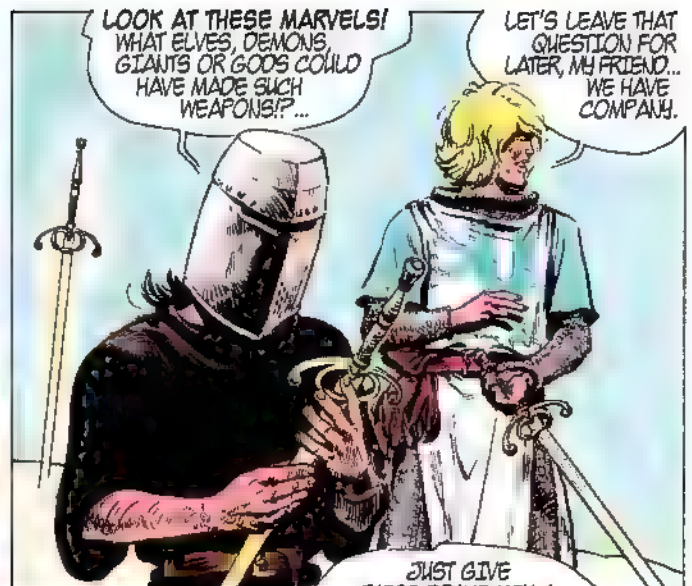


STAND ON MY HAND...
GO ON!... PULL YOUR-
SELF UP...

A BIT MORE...
I'M NEARLY
THERE... I'VE GOT
THE EDGE...

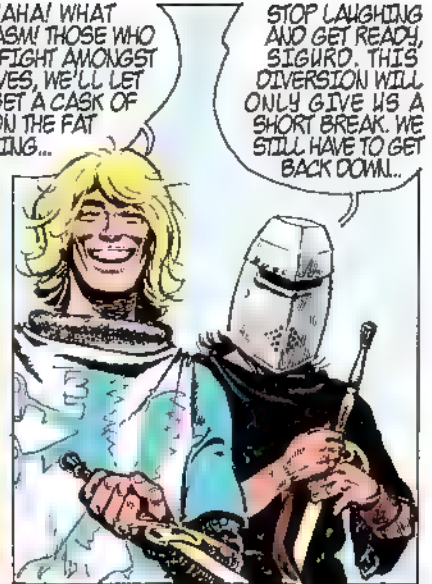


???





HAHAHA! WHAT ENTHUSIASM! THOSE WHO LOVE TO FIGHT AMONGST THEMSELVES, WE'LL LET THEM. I BET A CASK OF MEAD ON THE FAT VIKING...



STOP LAUGHING AND GET READY, SIGURD. THIS DIVERSION WILL ONLY GIVE US A SHORT BREAK. WE STILL HAVE TO GET BACK DOWN...



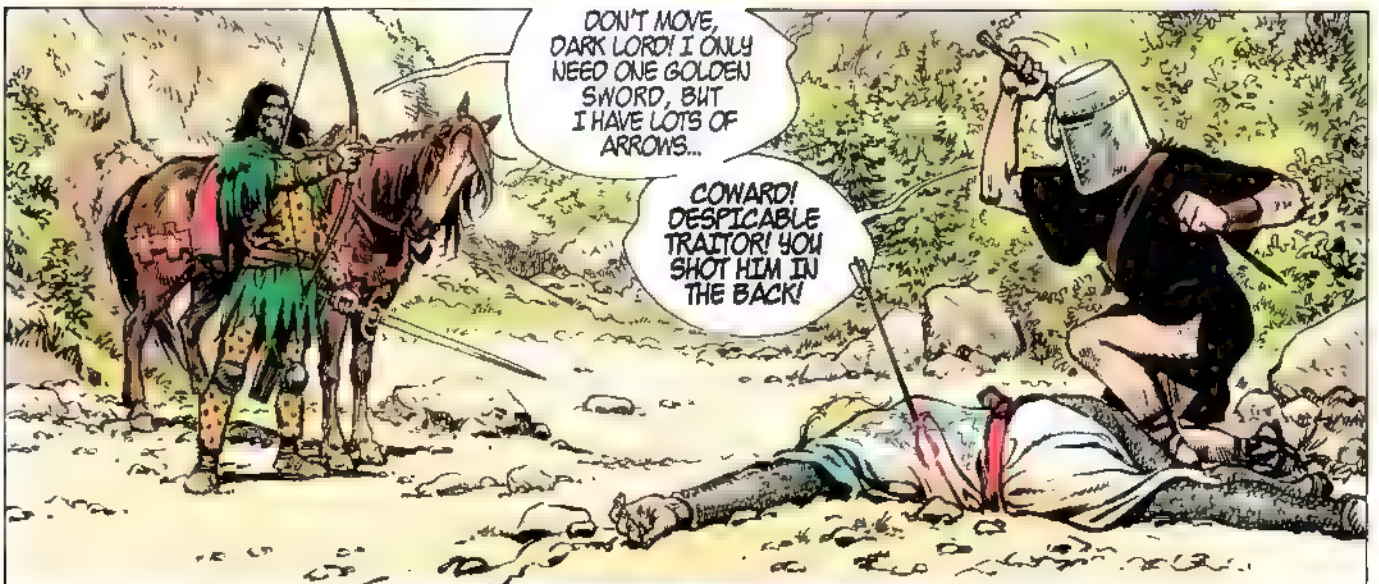
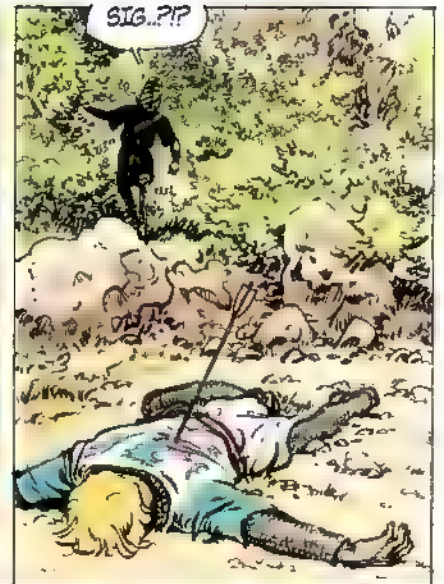
FINALLY, ON THE GROUND! I DEFINITELY FEEL BETTER AS A HUMAN BEING THAN AS A MOUNTAIN GOAT.



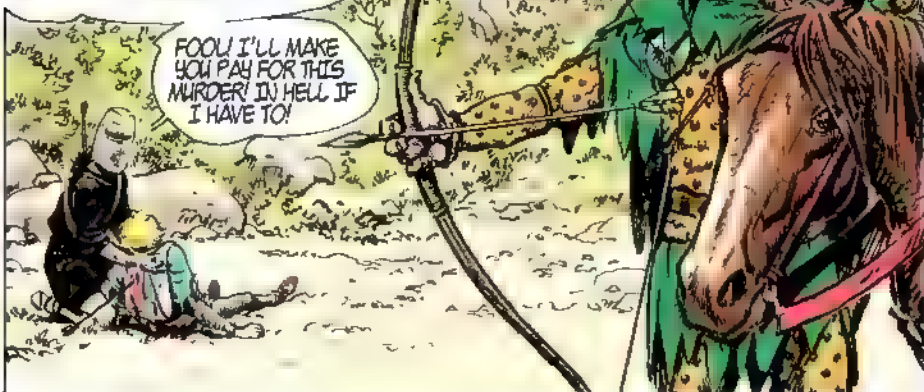
I'LL GET MY SWORD AND WAIT FOR YOU OVER THERE.



ALL RIGHT, I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MINUTE...



THE BACK OR THE FRONT, THE RESULT IS THE SAME... WHY SHOULD I RISK MY BONES CLAMBERING UP THAT MOUNTAIN WHEN IT WAS SO EASY TO WAIT FOR YOU TO COME DOWN, DON'T YOU THINK? AND THE TREASURE OF THE LAND OF ARAN IS WELL WORTH BENDING A FEW RULES OF HONOUR, HAH!





NOBLE LORDS, THESE GOLDEN SWORDS ARE NOW YOURS. THEY ALSO GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO TAKE THE SECOND TEST. DO YOU WANT TO PROCEED?

YES, WE WANT TO.



I, KARSHAN OF URIZEN, WILL WIN BY USING MY STRENGTH!



I, VOLSUNG OF NICHOR, WILL TRIUMPH BY USING MY MIND!

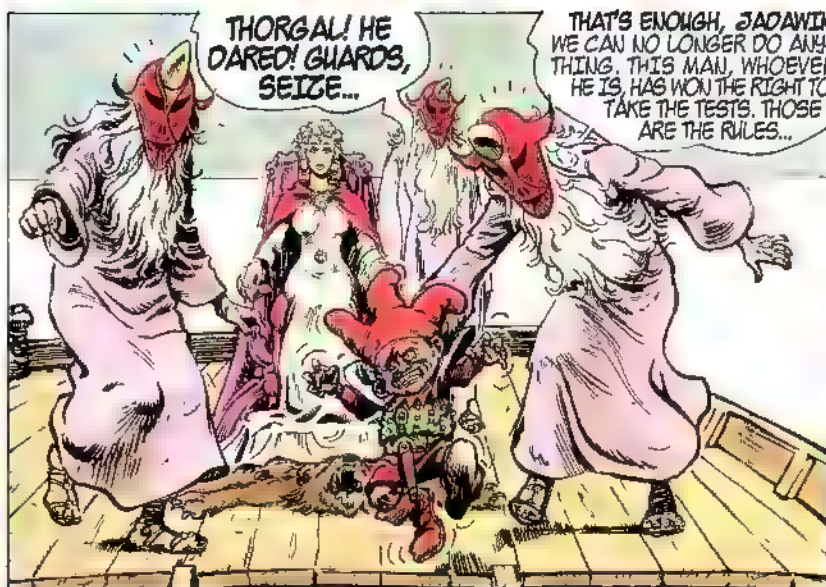


AS FOR ME, I WANT NEITHER TRIUMPH NOR VICTORY. I ONLY WANT JUSTICE, BUT I'LL GET IT...



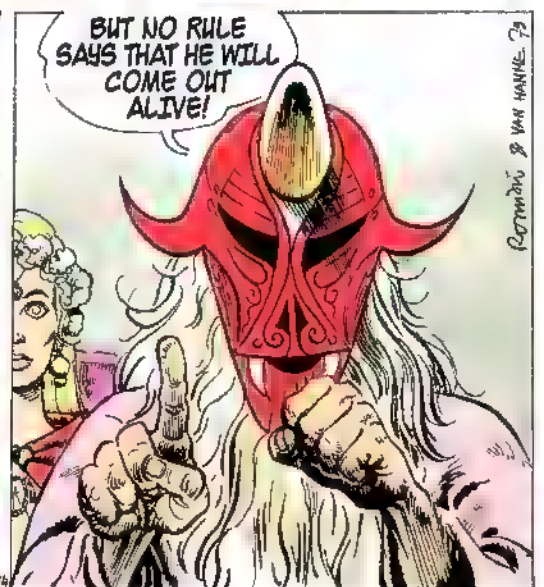
...BY USING ANGER!

?!?
THORGAL
!?



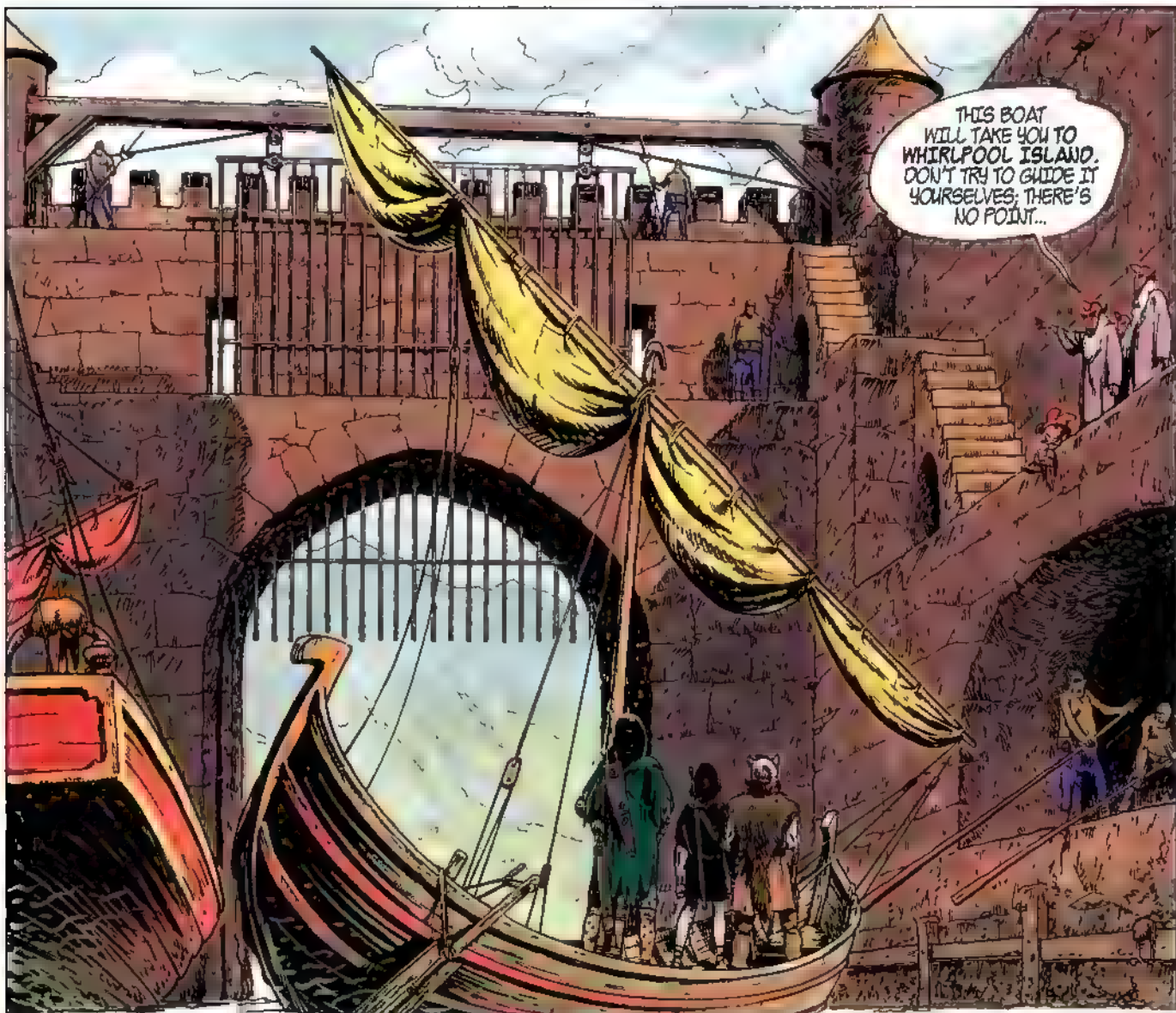
THORGAL! HE DARED! GUARDS, SEIZE...

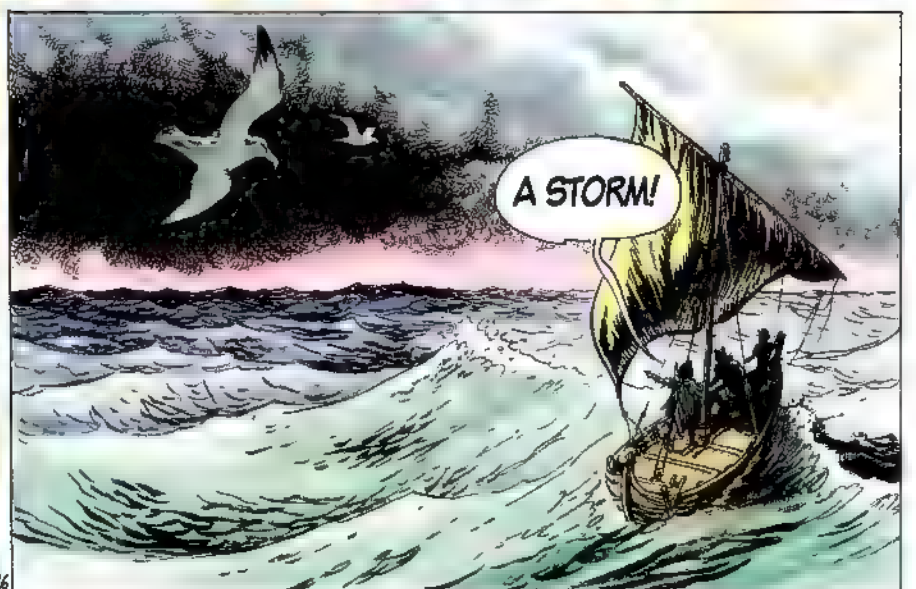
THAT'S ENOUGH, JADAWIN! WE CAN NO LONGER DO ANYTHING. THIS MAN, WHOEVER HE IS, HAS WON THE RIGHT TO TAKE THE TESTS. THOSE ARE THE RULES...

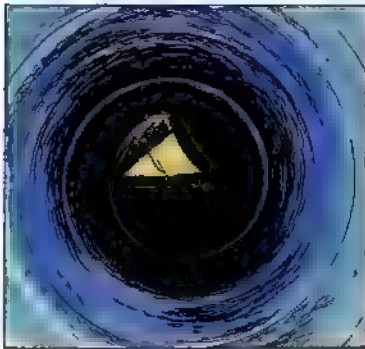
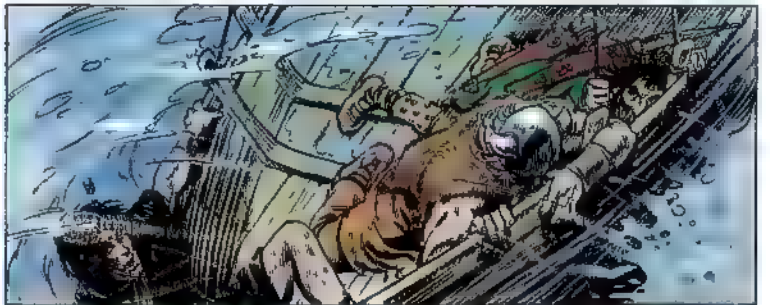
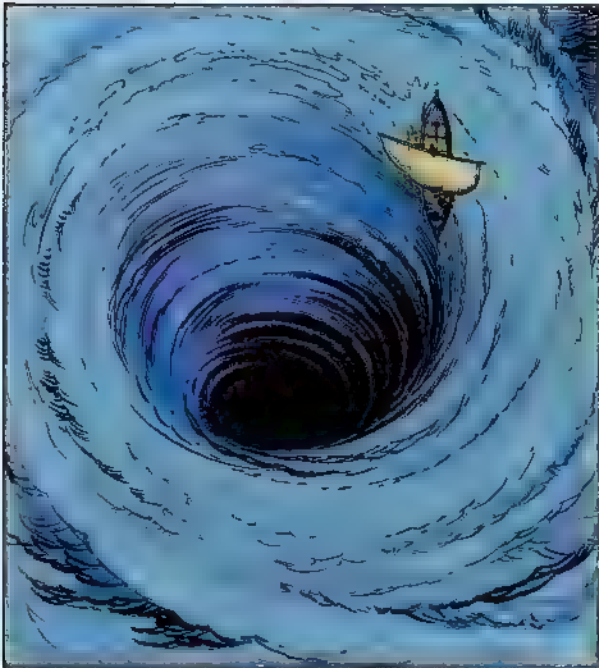
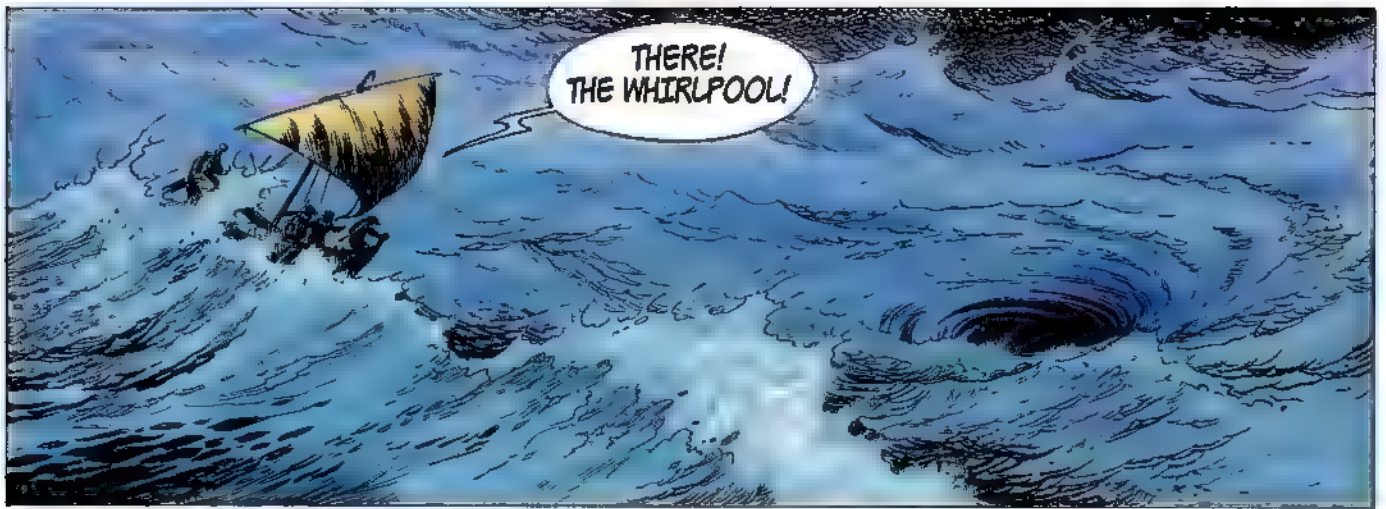


BUT NO RULE SAYS THAT HE WILL COME OUT ALIVE!

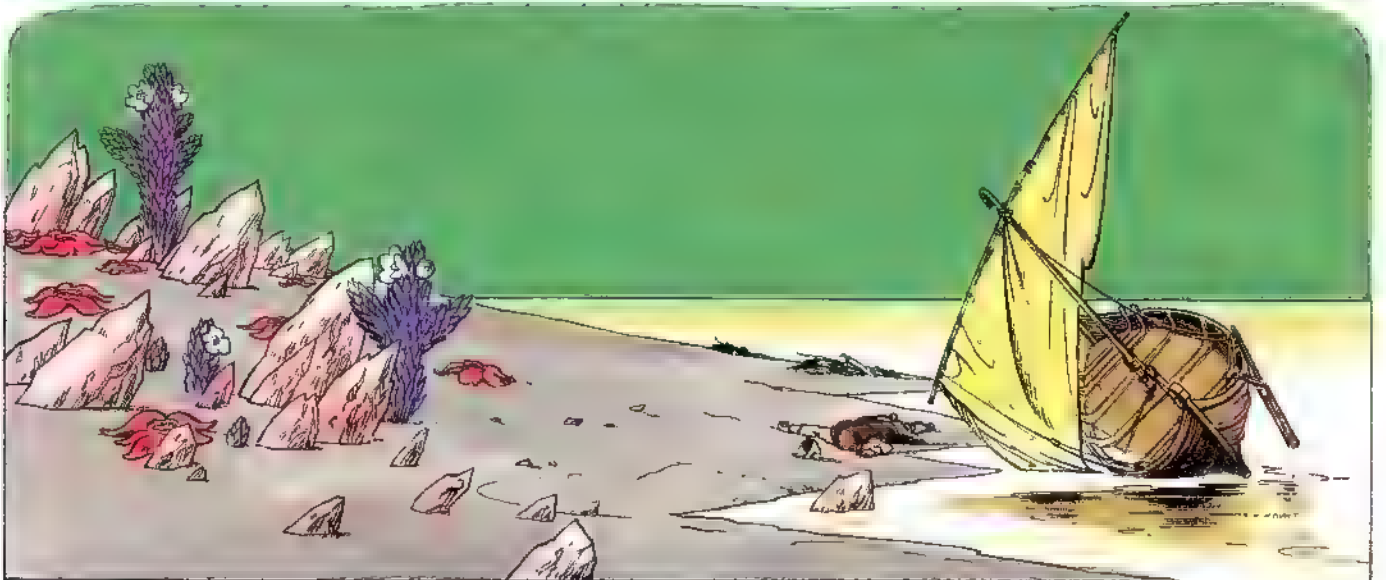
SCOTT & VAN HANDEL '79

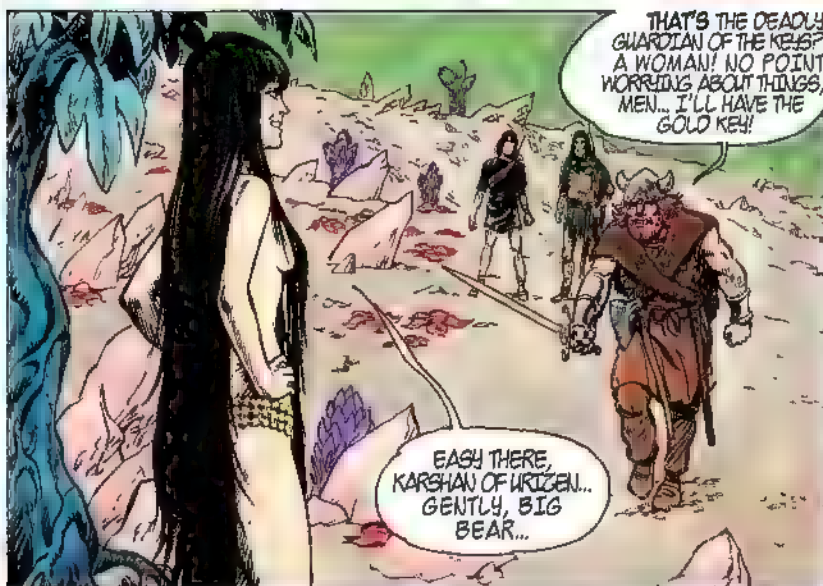
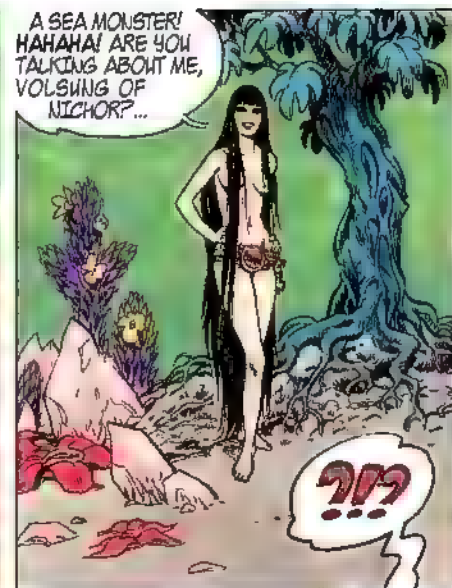
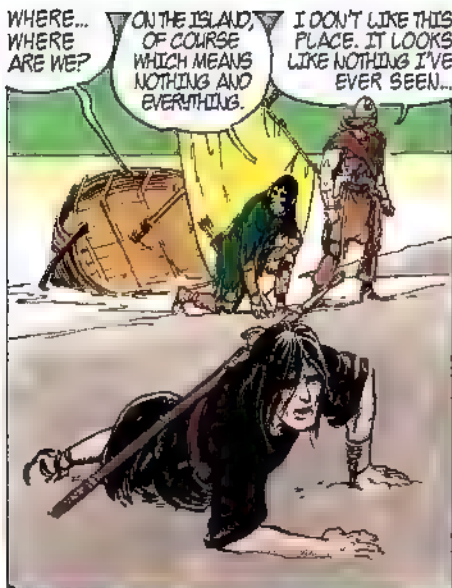


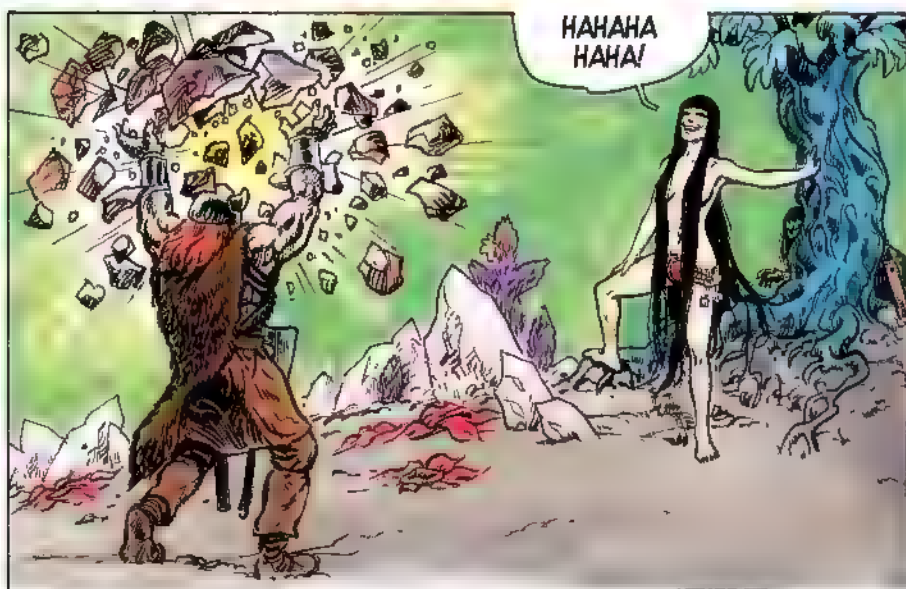
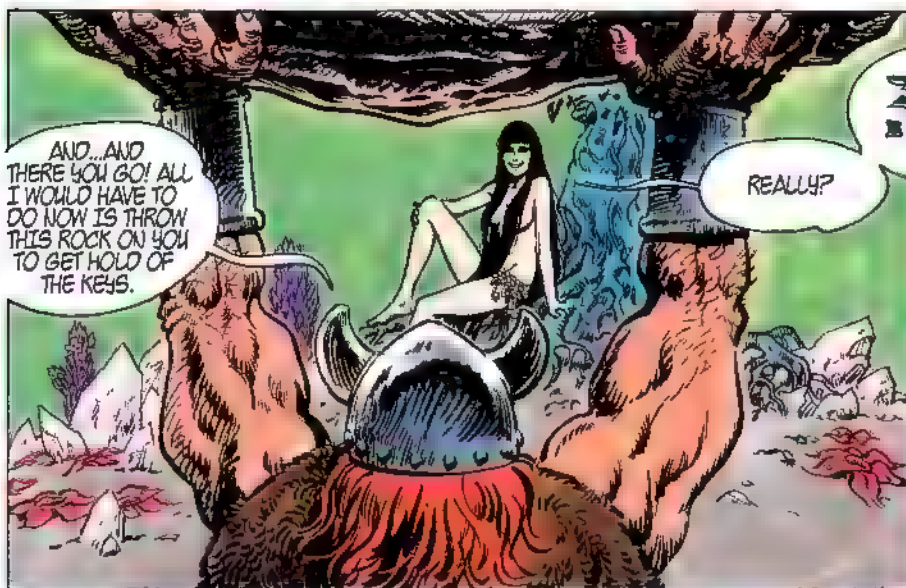
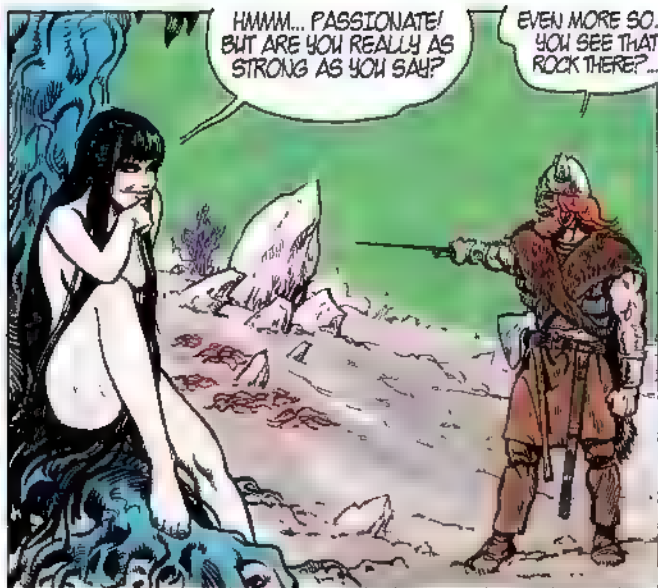


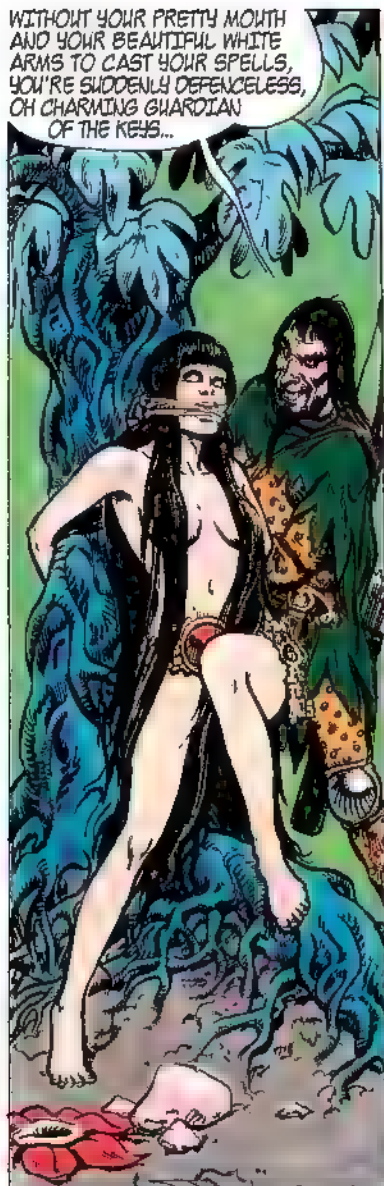


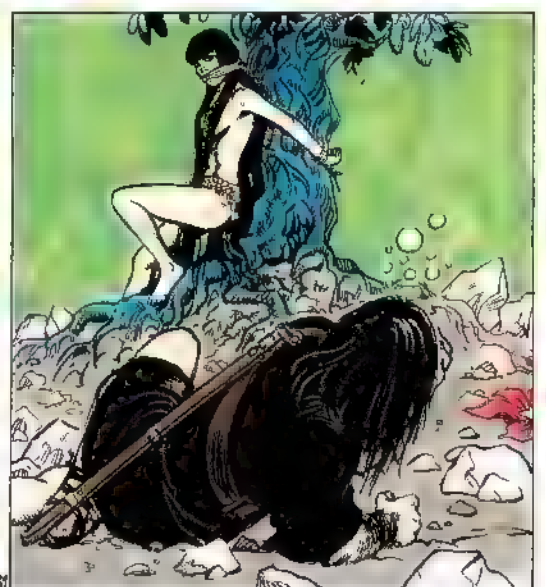
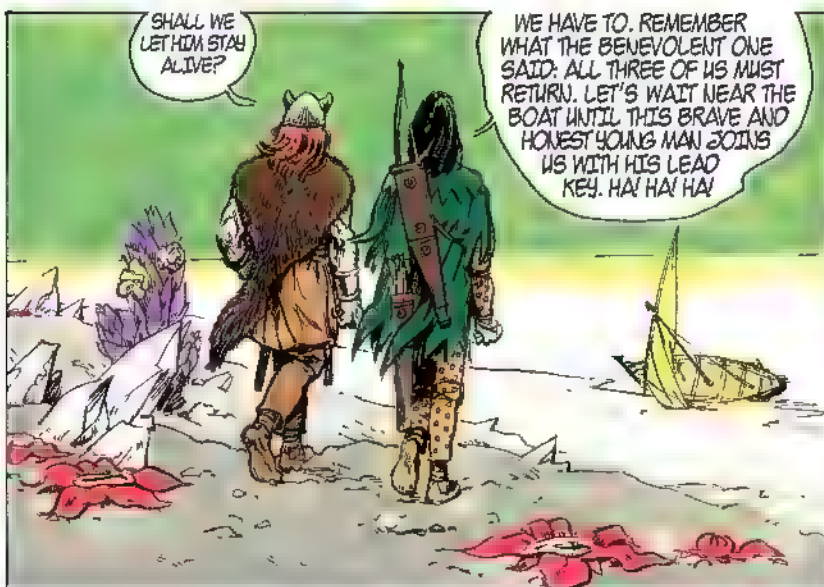
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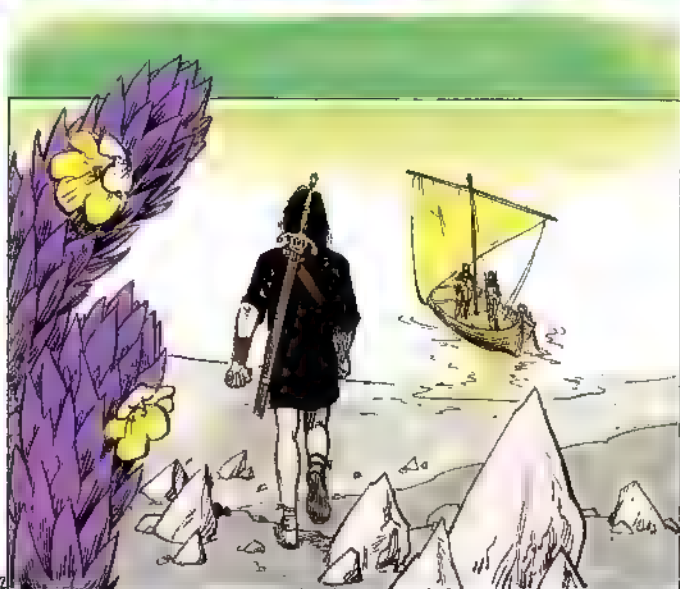
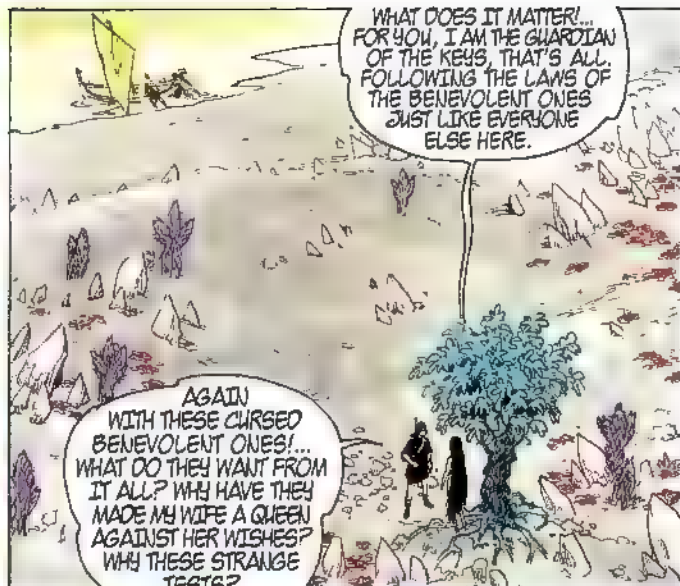
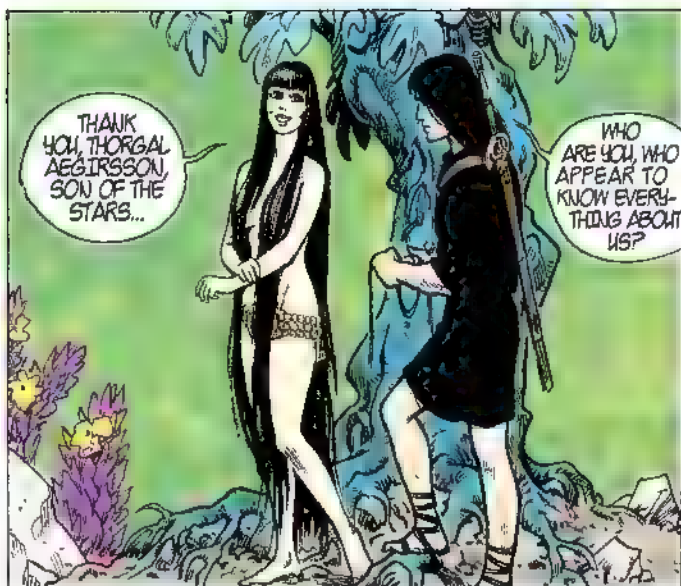


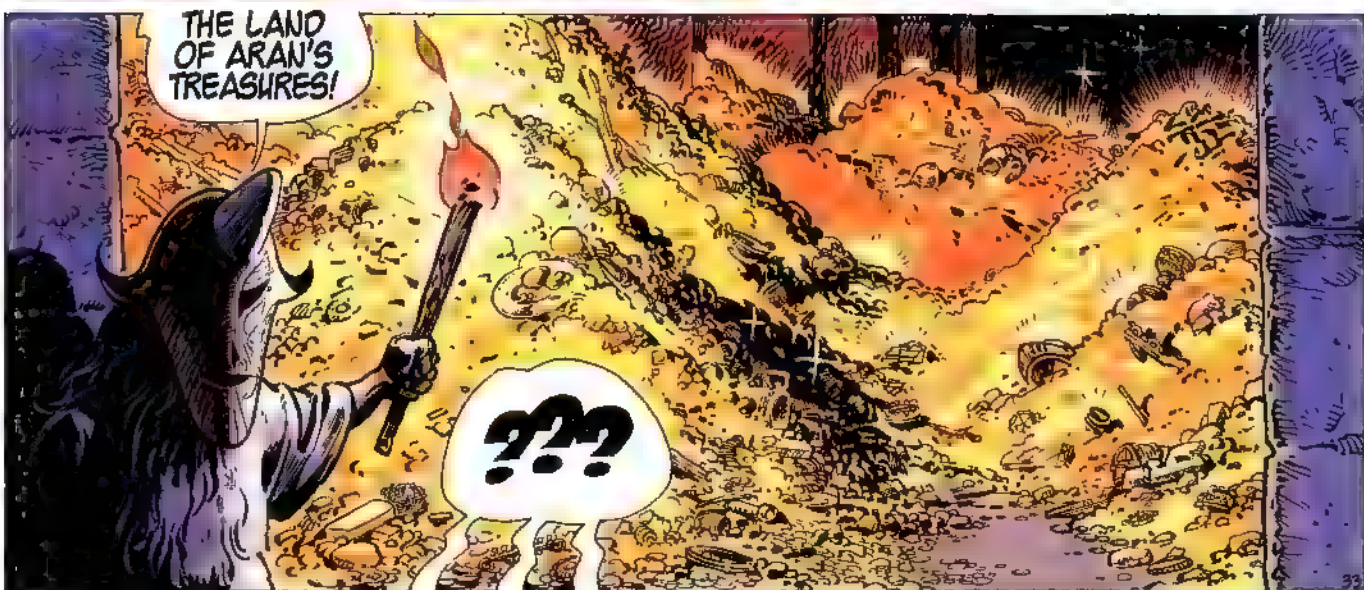














FABULOUS! IT'S FABULOUS! SO MUCH GOLD!... BUT WHERE COULD IT ALL HAVE COME FROM?

IT'S EASY TO GUESS...



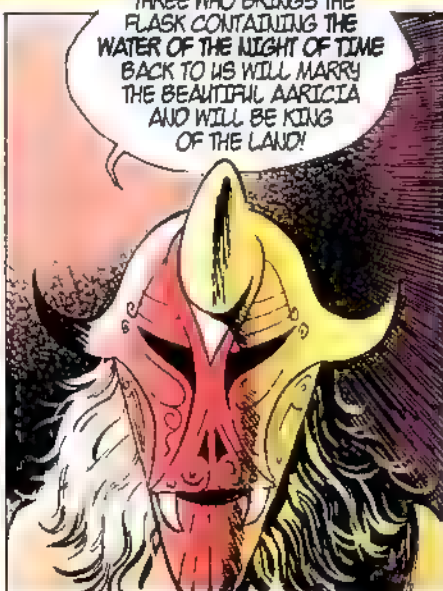
THESE THREE WRETCHES WHO MAKE PEOPLE CALL THEM BENEVOLENT ONES PROBABLY DISCOVERED GOLD DEPOSITS IN THE SURROUNDING MOUNTAINS. FOR AN INCALCULABLE NUMBER OF YEARS, THEY FORCED THE UNHAPPY PEOPLE OF THIS LAND TO WORK IN THEM.

THIS IS THE RESULT.

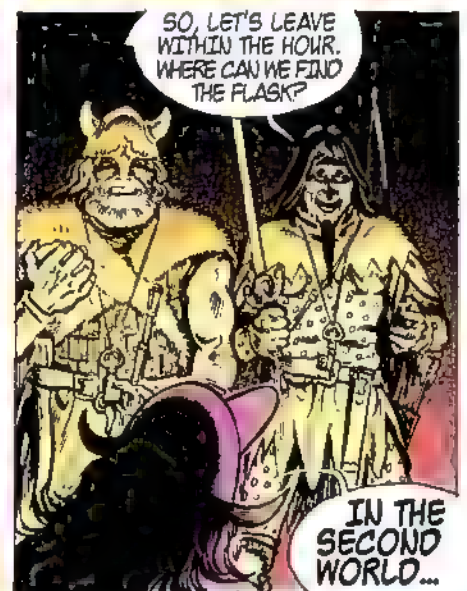


IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW! TO REIGN OVER THIS TREASURE, I WOULD CROSS HELL... SPEAK FAST, OLD MAN: WHAT IS THE LAST TEST?

I'LL TELL YOU...



THE ONE OF YOU THREE WHO BRINGS THE FLASK CONTAINING THE WATER OF THE NIGHT OF TIME BACK TO US WILL MARRY THE BEAUTIFUL AARICIA AND WILL BE KING OF THE LAND!



SO, LET'S LEAVE WITHIN THE HOUR. WHERE CAN WE FIND THE FLASK?

IN THE SECOND WORLD...



THE SECOND WORLD? WHAT IS IT? WHERE IS IT?

WE KNOW NOTHING. WE ONLY KNOW THE GATEWAYS THAT LEAD THERE...



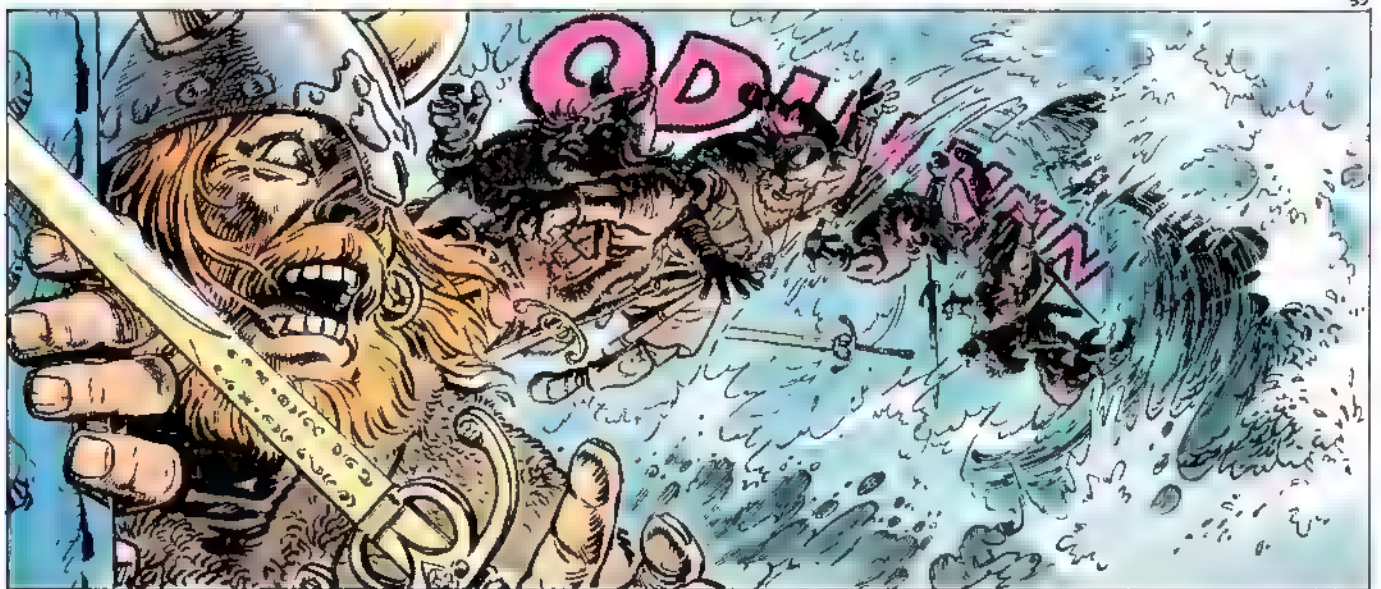
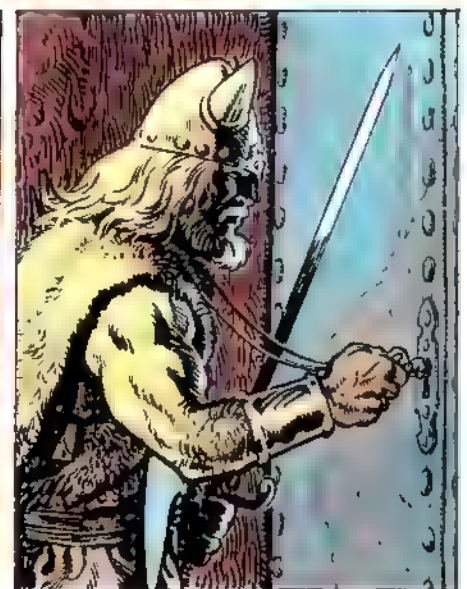
HERE THEY ARE!



ONLY ONE OF THESE DOORS LEADS TO THE SECOND WORLD. WE DON'T KNOW WHICH ONE. KARSHAN OF URIZEN, YOU HOLD THE GOLD KEY. YOU GET THE FIRST CHOICE!



I'M A VIKING... THE SEA HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY ALLY. I CHOOSE THE WATER DOOR.



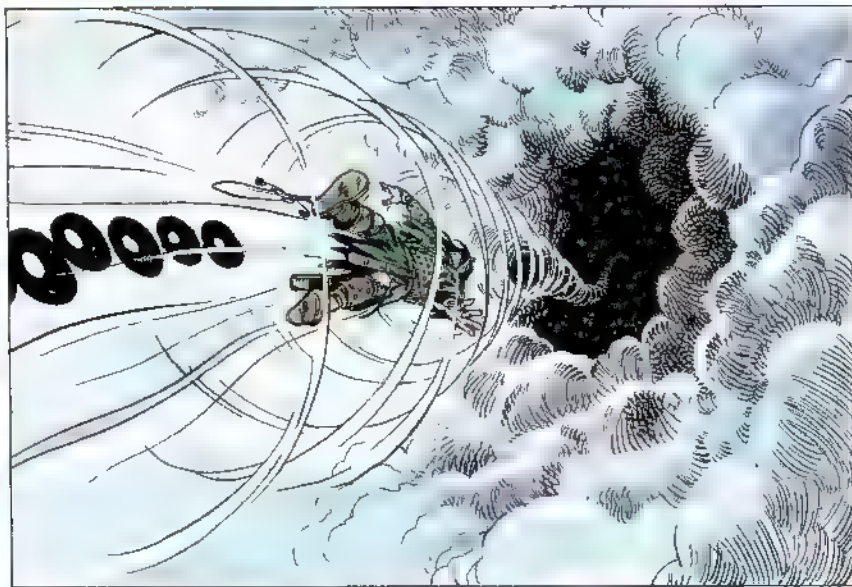
YOUR TURN, VOLUNG
OF NICHOR; YOU
HAVE THE
SILVER KEY.



HMM... THE AIR IS THE SKY,
TREES, BIRDS, MAN... AIR,
IT'S LIFE...



I CHOOSE
THE AIR
DOOR!



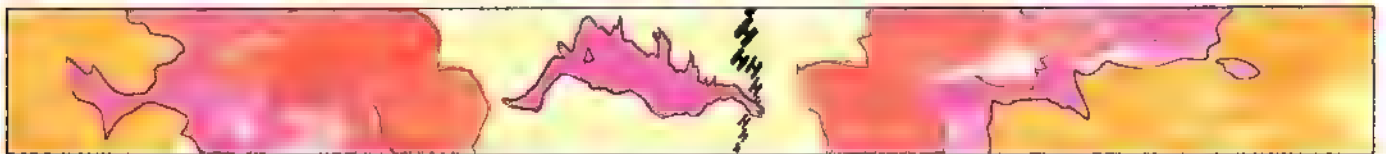
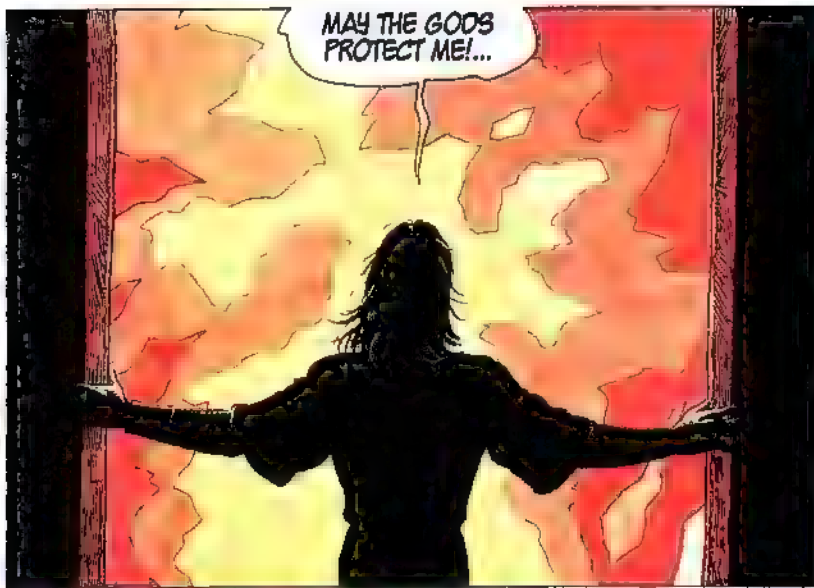
YOUR TURN, THORGAL.
IF YOU WANT TO FIND
YOUR WIFE, YOU ONLY
HAVE ONE OPTION:
THE FIRE DOOR,
HAHAHA!

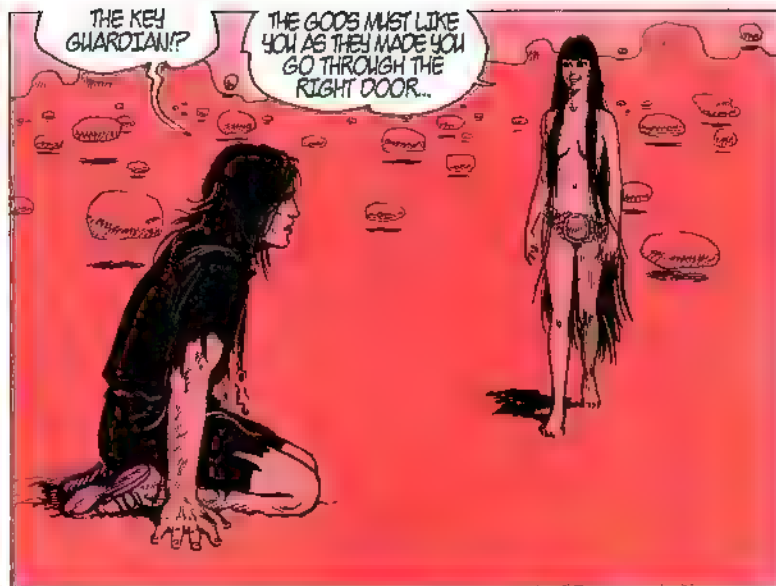
A CURSE ON
ALL THREE OF YOU!
I SHOULD KILL YOU
ALL WITHOUT WAS-
TING ANOTHER
BREATH...



BUT YOUR DEATH WON'T FREE
AARICIA FROM THE SPELL YOU'VE
PUT HER UNDER. I WILL THUS GO TO
THE END OF THE TESTS THAT YOU SET.
WITH ONE SOLE HOPE: TO FIND OUT
HOW TO DESTROY YOU.





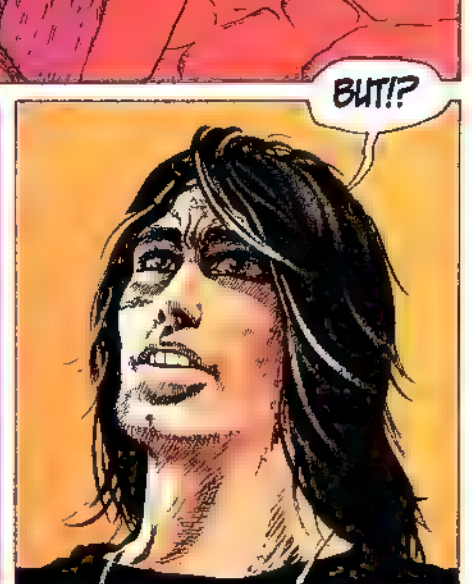
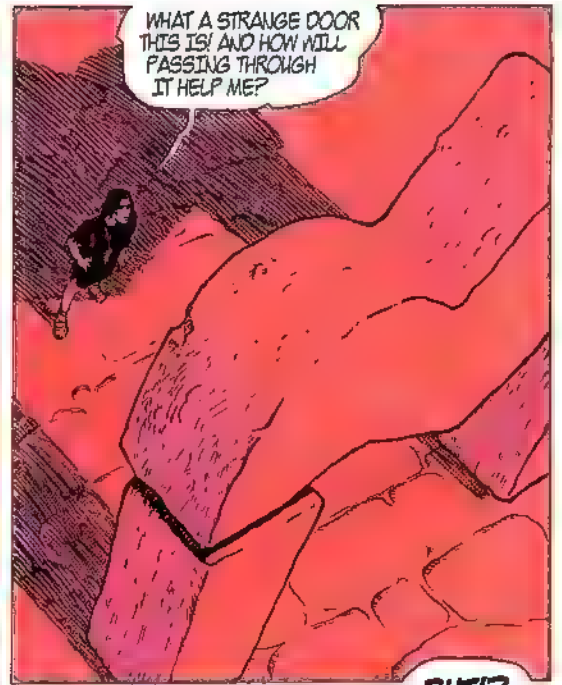


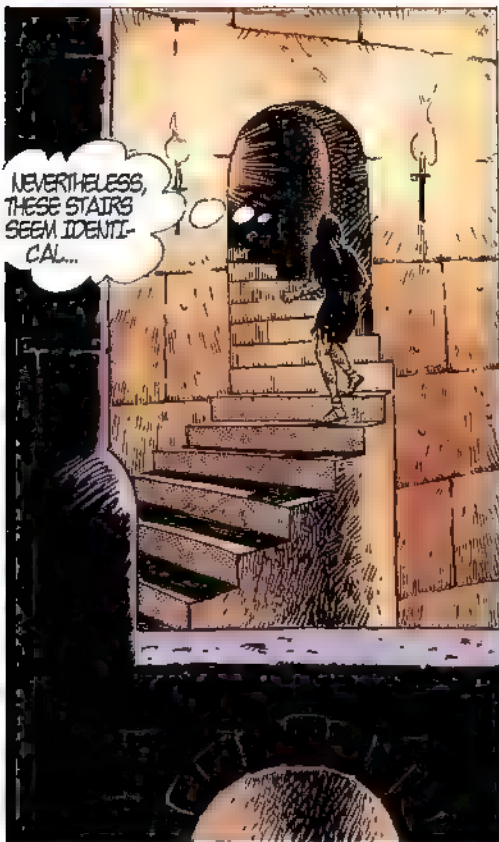
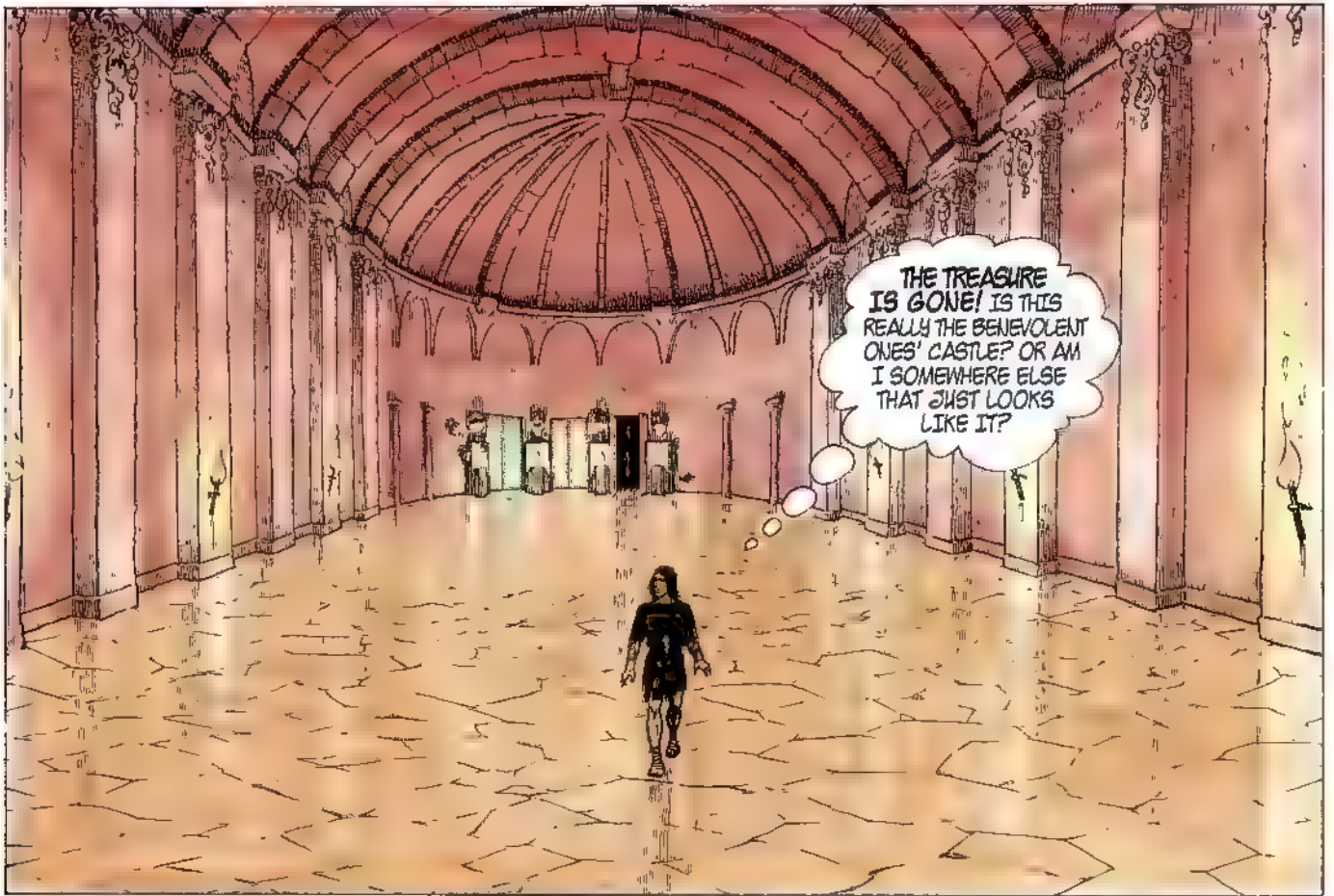
KARSHAN THE BRUTE DROWNED IN THE WHIRLPOOLS OF THE IN-BETWEEN-WORLDS. AS FOR THAT ROGUE VOLSUNG, HE'S FLOATING FOR ETERNITY IN THE INFINITY OF SPACE. I AM HAPPY THAT IT'S YOU WHO HAS MADE IT HERE, THORGAL AEGIRSSON.

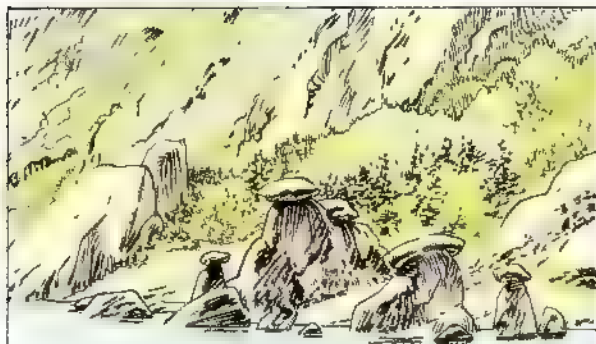


GO NOW, THORGAL, AND REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO WIN: ONE THAT LEADS TO TRIUMPH AND ANOTHER THAT LEADS TO SACRIFICE. REMEMBER...









BUT IT'S STILL
THE SAME PLACE.
THE SAME LAKE.
THE SAME
MOUNTAINS.
THE SAME
CASTLE...



WHAT
HALLUCINATION
AM I NOW A
VICTIM OF?



THE VILLAGE!...
THE VILLAGE
IS GONE!

AND WHAT IF EVERYTHING WAS
ONLY A DREAM, A NIGHTMARE
CONJURED UP BY SOME EVIL
SORCERY?...

THEN I'D
UNDERSTAND!

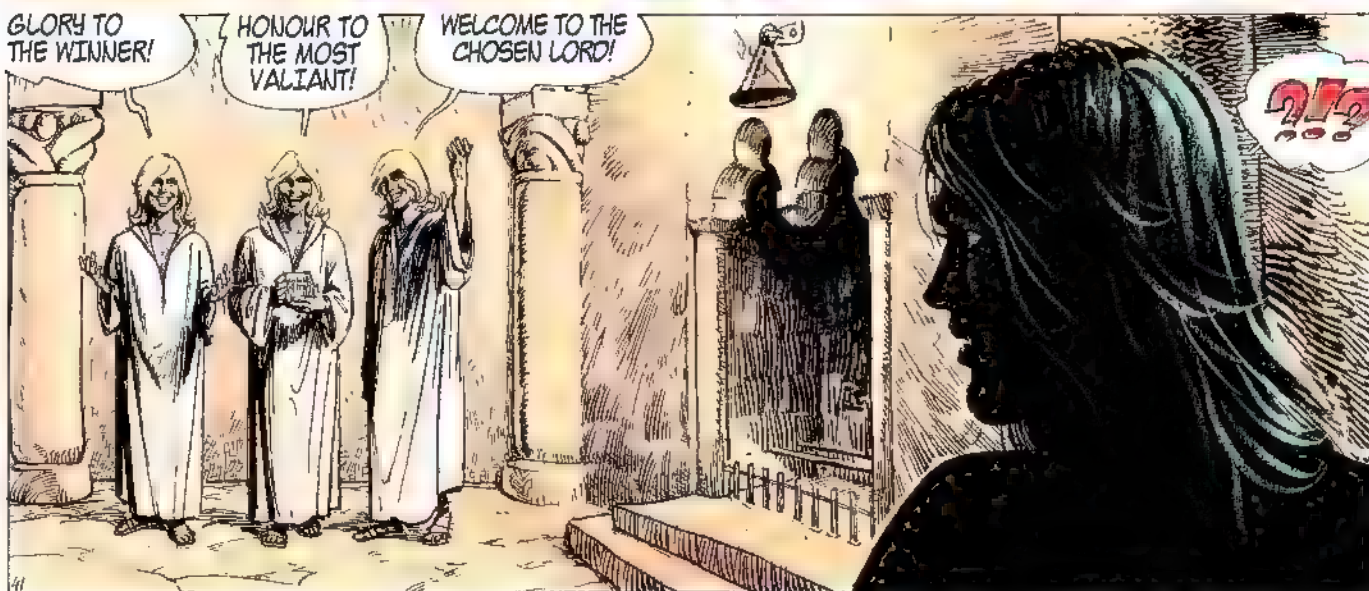


HELLO!
ANYONE
THERE?

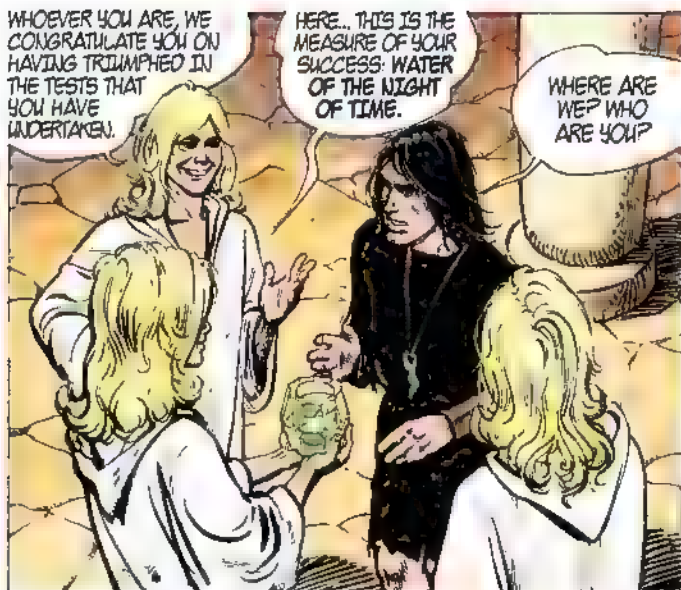
GLORY TO
THE WINNER!

HONOUR TO
THE MOST
VALIANT!

WELCOME TO THE
CHOSEN LORD!



???



WHOEVER YOU ARE, WE CONGRATULATE YOU ON HAVING TRIUMPHED IN THE TESTS THAT YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN.

HERE... THIS IS THE MEASURE OF YOUR SUCCESS: WATER OF THE NIGHT OF TIME.

WHERE ARE WE? WHO ARE YOU?



DON'T ASK ANY QUESTIONS GO BACK THROUGH THE DOOR FROM WHENCE YOU CAME AND TAKE THIS FLASK TO THOSE WHO ASKED YOU FOR IT.

THOSE WHO? BY THE RINGS OF MIDGARD, I UNDERSTAND IT ALL...



YOU'RE THE BENEVOLENT ONES!



WELL, WELL... LOOKS LIKE THIS ONE IS A LITTLE LESS STUPID THAN THE LAST ONES.

AND WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU GUESSED, MY FRIEND?

YOU FOUND THE WAY TO SUBJUGATE THE INHABITANTS OF THIS LAND, MAKING THEM WORK LIKE SLAVES IN YOUR GOLD DEPOSITS, GENERATION AFTER GENERATION. AND SO THAT IT STAYS THAT WAY, EVERY HUNDRED YEARS YOU INVENT A REASON TO MAKE A FEW NAIVE AND GREEDY LORDS PARTICIPATE IN A SERIES OF TESTS...



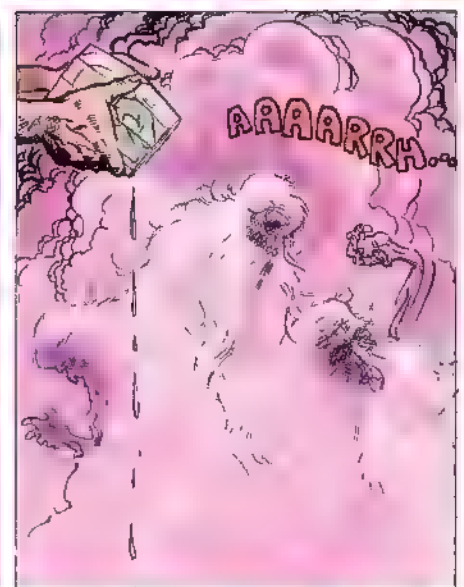
THIS WAY YOU MANAGE TO SEND THE MOST VALIANT OF THEM INTO YOUR OWN PAST TO FIND THIS DRINK, WHICH WILL ALLOW YOU TO LIVE AND PILE UP YOUR GOLD FOR ANOTHER CENTURY!

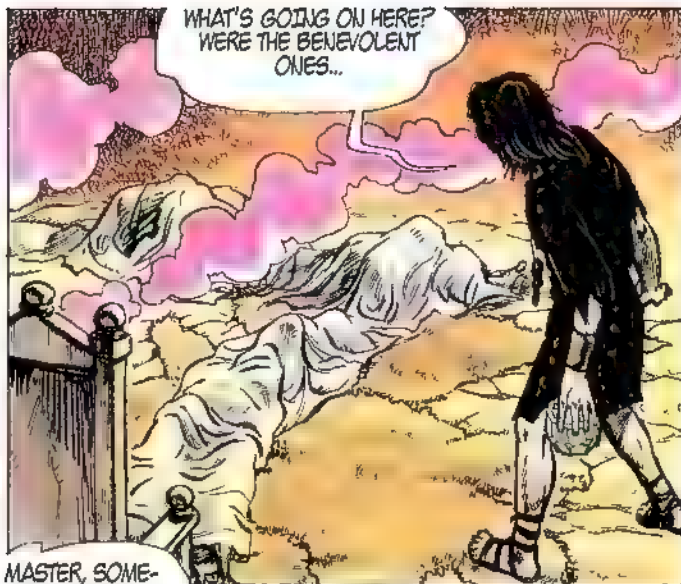


COMPLIMENTS... YOU ARE MORE ASTUTE THAN WE COULD HAVE THOUGHT.

WE ARE, IN FACT, MORE THAN A THOUSAND YEARS BEFORE YOUR TIME.

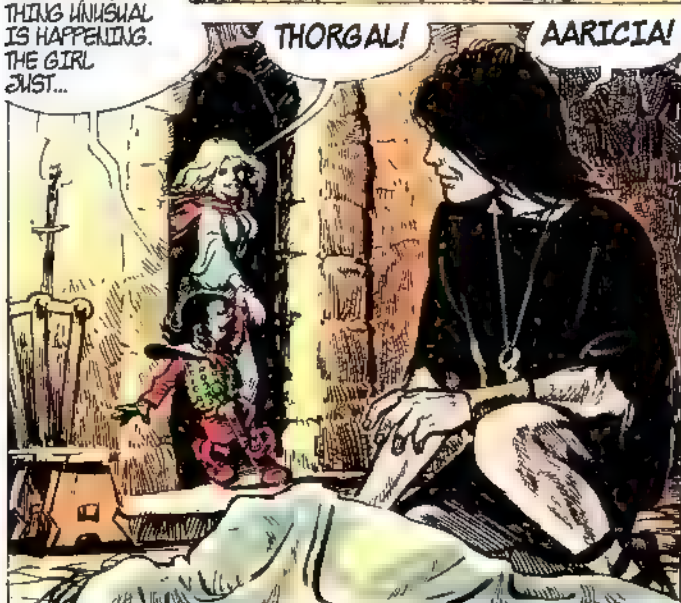
BUT THAT MATTERS LITTLE... THE ONLY WAY FOR YOU TO SAVE YOURSELF IS TO TAKE THAT FLASK TO THOSE WHO SENT YOU, WHICH MEANS BACK TO OURSELVES, HAH HA!





WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WERE THE BENEVOLENT
ONES...

MASTER, SOME-
THING UNUSUAL
IS HAPPENING.
THE GIRL
JUST...



THORGAL!

AARICIA!



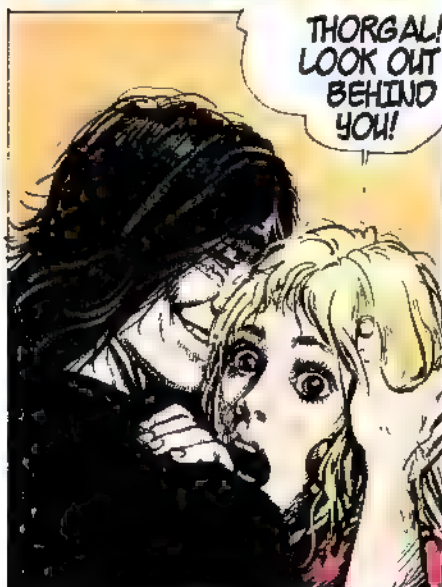
HOW DREADFUL!



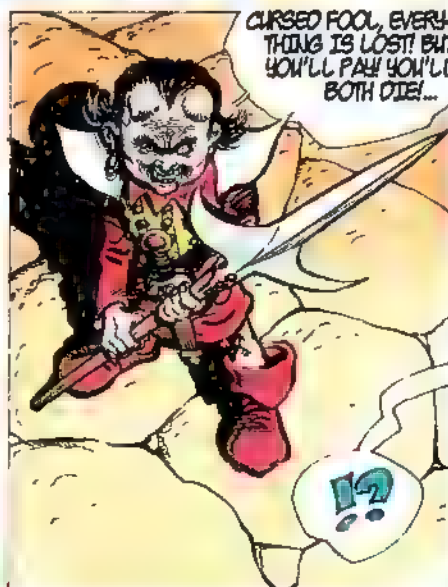
AARICIA,
YOU'RE
SAVED... IT'S
WONDERFUL!

OH, THORGAL,
FINALLY YOU'RE
HERE!

THE MASTERS!?
... IT'S... IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE...



THORGAL!
LOOK OUT
BEHIND
YOU!

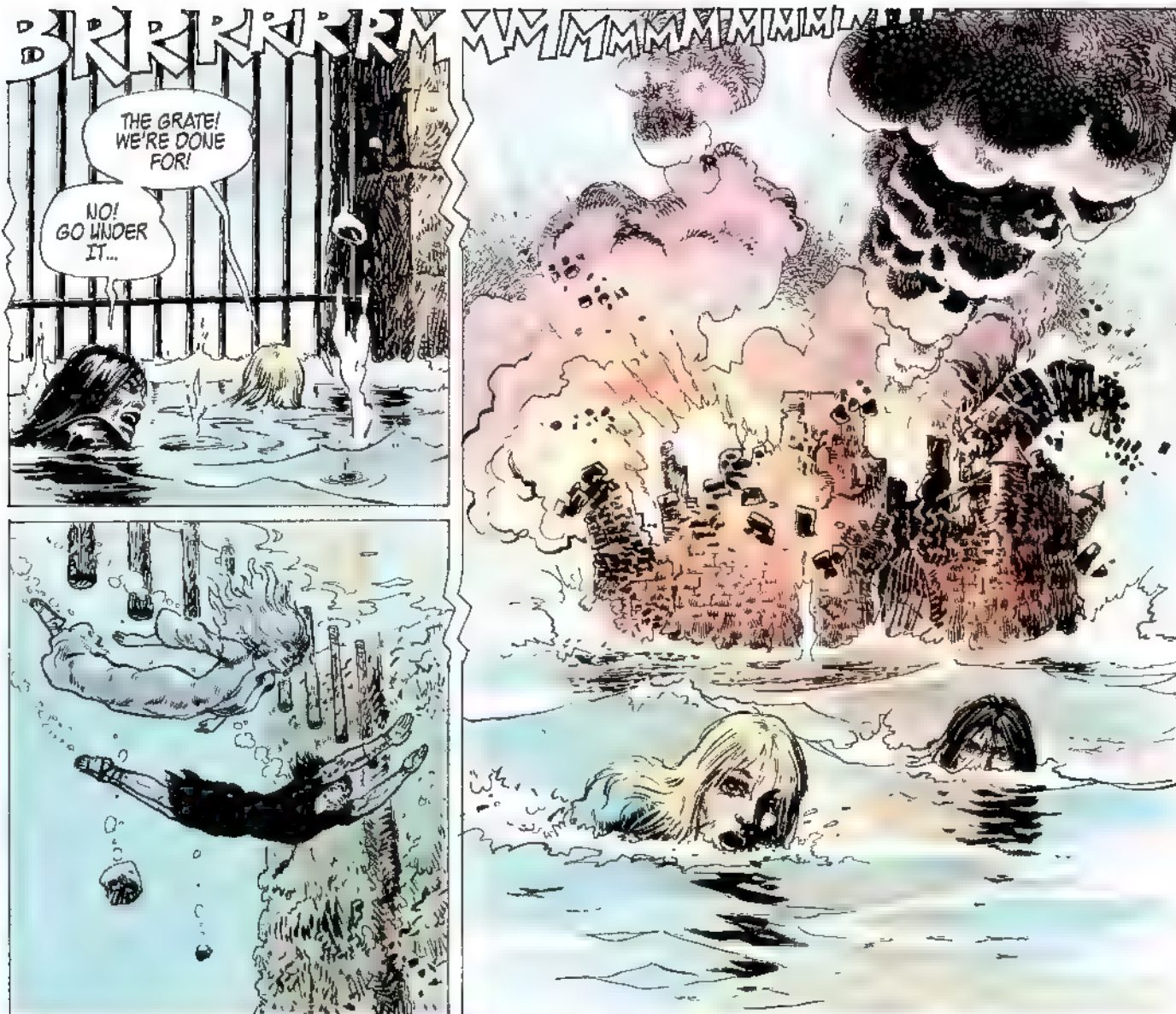


CURSED FOOL, EVERY-
THING IS LOST! BUT
YOU'LL PAY! YOU'LL
BOTH DIE!...

!?



WHAT
THE...?



THE GRATE!
WE'RE DONE
FOR!

NO!
GO UNDER
IT...

HOW AWFUL! THAT
CASTLE... WHAT
HAPPENED,
THORGAL?

THE BENEVOLENT ONES
CEASED HURTING PEOPLE
AND CEASED EXISTING,
TOO. AND WITH THEM WENT
ALL THAT THEY HAD BUILT
WITH THE BLOOD OF
THE PEOPLE.

I HARDLY
REMEMBER... LIKE
A NIGHTMARE THAT
FADES AWAY... WILL
YOU EXPLAIN
IT TO ME?

YES,
PERHAPS... ONE
DAY... BUT RIGHT
NOW NONE OF
THAT MATTERS
ANYMORE.

Rossini & VAN HAMME

END



THORCAL

The Black Galley

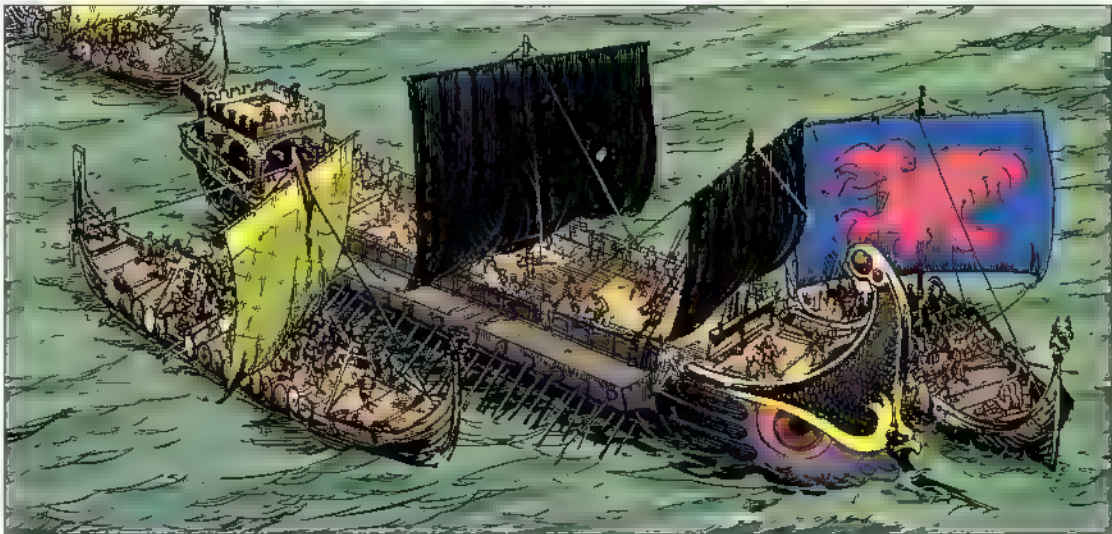
ROSINSKI-VAN HAMME

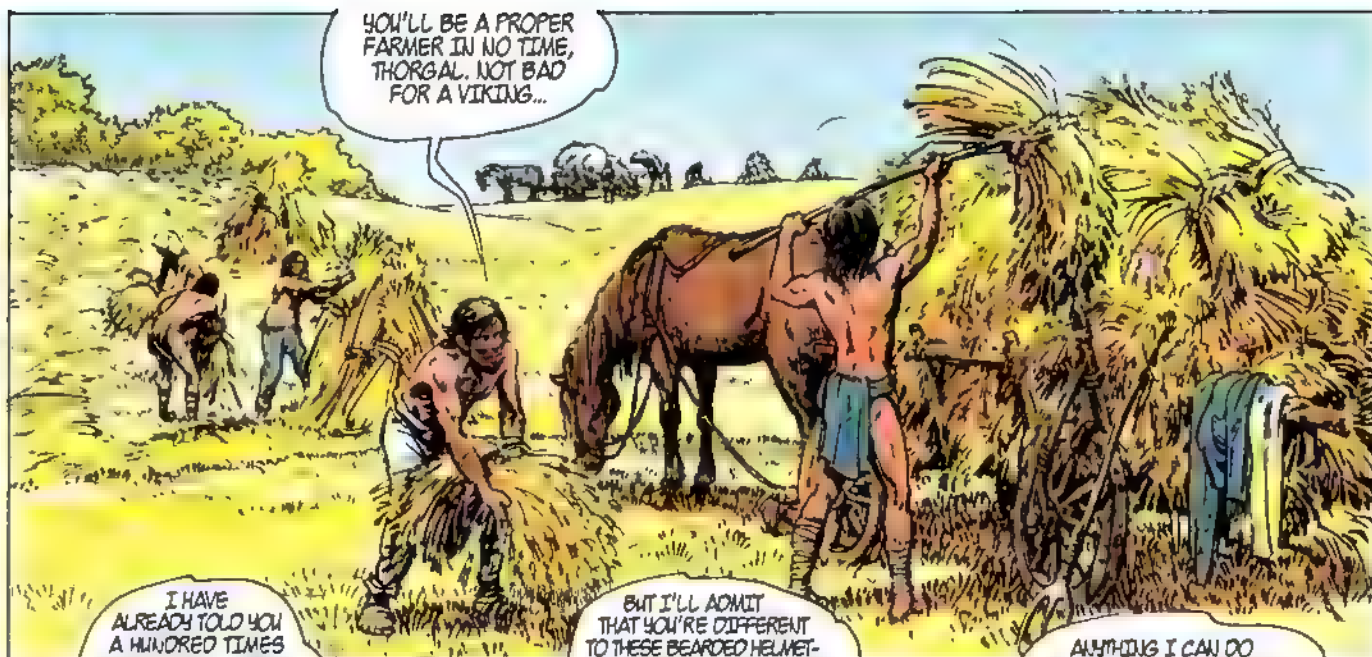


ROSINSKI-VAN HAMME

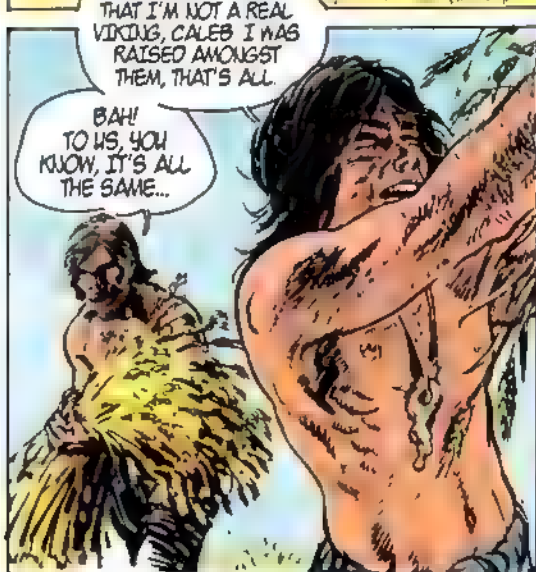
THORCAL

The Black Galley





YOU'LL BE A PROPER FARMER IN NO TIME, THORGAL. NOT BAD FOR A VIKING...

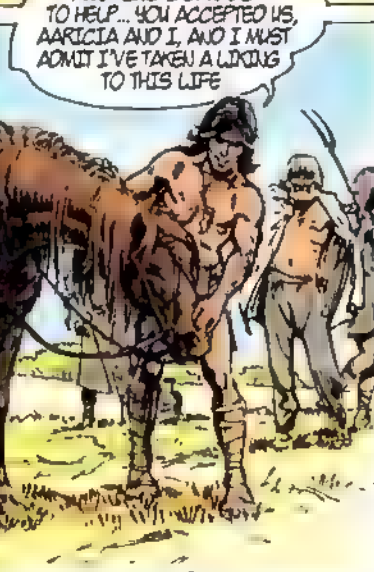


I HAVE ALREADY TOLD YOU A HUNDRED TIMES THAT I'M NOT A REAL VIKING, CALEB. I WAS RAISED AMONGST THEM, THAT'S ALL.

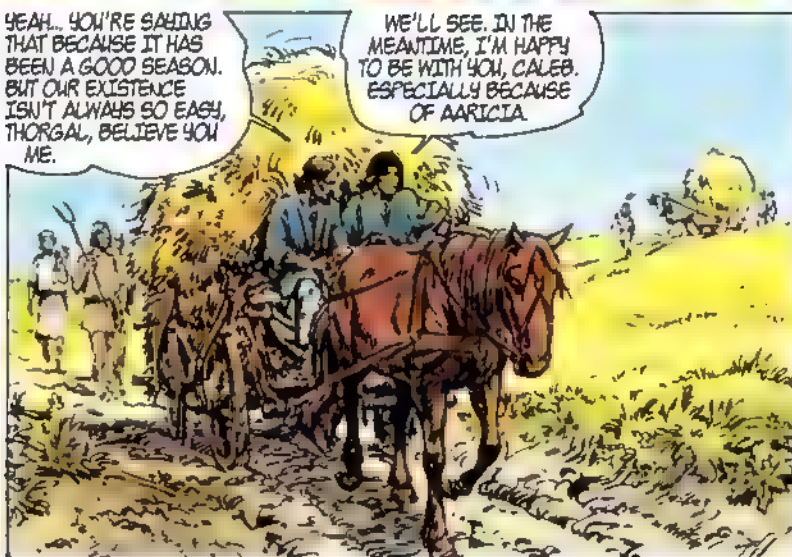
BAH! TO US, YOU KNOW, IT'S ALL THE SAME...



BUT I'LL ADMIT THAT YOU'RE DIFFERENT TO THESE BEARDED HELMET-HEAD BRUTES. YOUR ARMS AND YOUR HORSE HAVE HELPED US A LOT IN THE VILLAGE...



ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP... YOU ACCEPTED US, AARICIA AND I, AND I MUST ADMIT I'VE TAKEN A LIKING TO THIS LIFE



YEAH... YOU'RE SAYING THAT BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN A GOOD SEASON. BUT OUR EXISTENCE ISN'T ALWAYS SO EASY, THORGAL, BELIEVE YOU ME.

WE'LL SEE. IN THE MEANTIME, I'M HAPPY TO BE WITH YOU, CALEB. ESPECIALLY BECAUSE OF AARICIA.



HERE THEY ARE!



CAN I HELP YOU RUB HIM DOWN, THORGAL?

OF COURSE, SHANTIAH, IF YOU HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO...

DON'T YOU THINK THORGAL IS OLD ENOUGH TO LOOK AFTER HIS OWN HORSE?

BUT, FATHER, I...

SHUT UP AND GO UNLOAD WITH THE OTHERS!

YES, FATHER.

PPFF... DO YOU REALISE WHAT'S HAPPENING? SHE ISN'T 16 YET AND ALREADY THINKS SHE'S AN ADULT...

SHANTIAH ISN'T VERY FAR AWAY FROM BECOMING A WOMAN, CALEB.

NONSENSE! BUT LET'S LEAVE HER AND GO SEE WHAT OUR WIVES HAVE RUSTLED UP FOR THE END OF HARVEST MEAL...

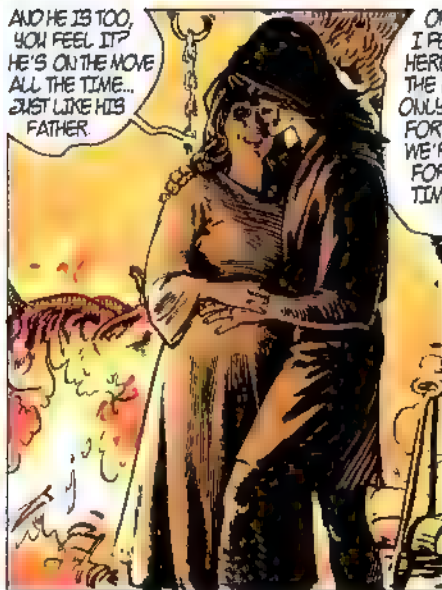
HAHAHA!... WELL, DOESN'T THAT SMELL GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT!

THORGAL...

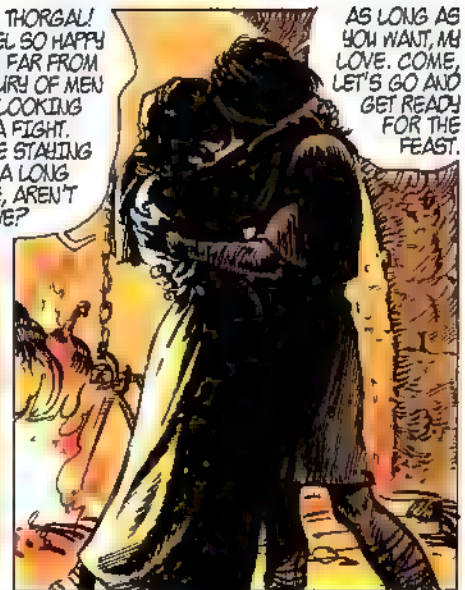


AARICIA! YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOING THAT... YOU'LL TIRE YOURSELF OUT...

NO, NO, LOOK: I'M FINE...



AND HE IS TOO, YOU FEEL IT? HE'S ON THE MOVE ALL THE TIME... JUST LIKE HIS FATHER



OH, THORGAL! I FEEL SO HAPPY HERE, FAR FROM THE FURY OF MEN ONLY LOOKING FOR A FIGHT. WE'RE STAYING FOR A LONG TIME, AREN'T WE?

AS LONG AS YOU WANT, MY LOVE. COME, LET'S GO AND GET READY FOR THE FEAST.



FRIENDS, OUR HARVESTS ARE OVER AND WE WILL HAVE AN ABUNDANCE OF BREAD THIS WINTER. LET'S DRINK TO THE GODS WHO SPARED US THE STORMS AND BAD WEATHER!

LET'S DRINK!

THAT'S RIGHT, LET'S DRINK!



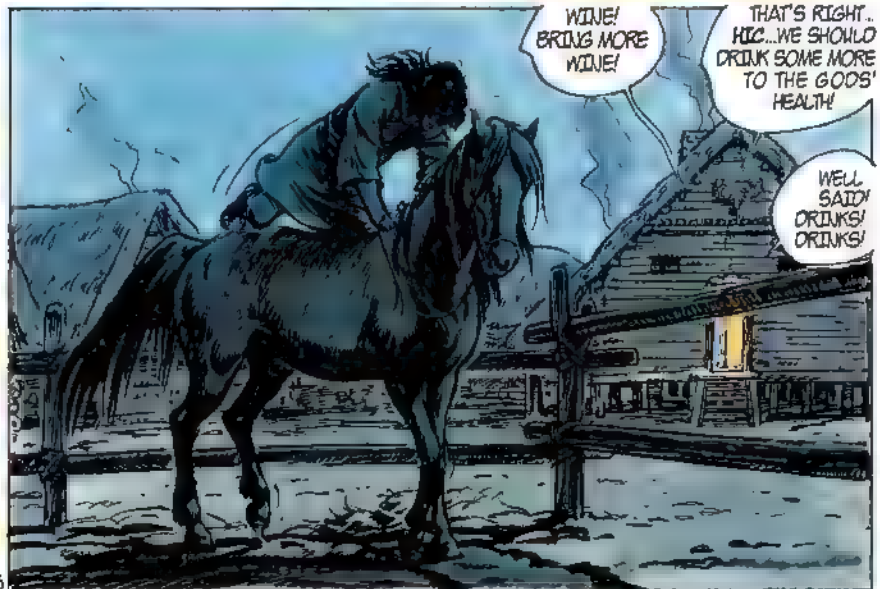
ERR... I SHOULD GO AND TAKE MY HORSE FOR A GALLOP, LIKE EVERY NIGHT. JUST PULLING THE CART ALL DAY, HE COULD PUT ON WEIGHT...

JUST LIKE A CERTAIN THORGAL WHO IS INCAPABLE OF STANDING AT A TABLE FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS, NO? GO AND HAVE A QUICK GALLOP, MY DARLING.



THORGAL... I KNOW THAT WE ARE HERE IN THIS VILLAGE BECAUSE OF ME. ARE... ARE YOU SURE THAT YOU DON'T REGRET ANYTHING?

DON'T SAY THAT, AARICIA. I, TOO, FEEL AT HOME HERE. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

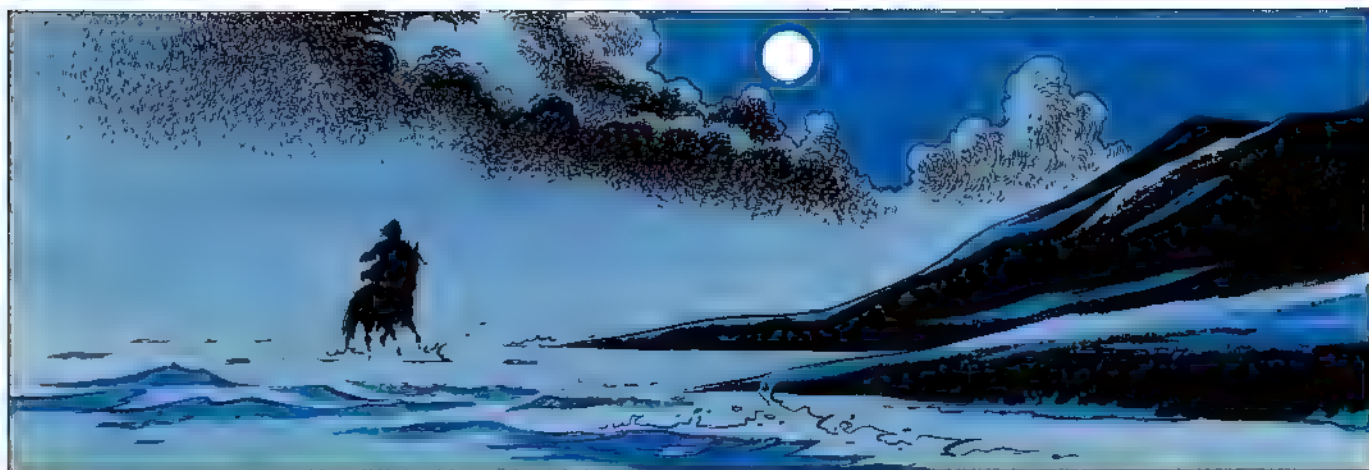


WINE! BRING MORE WINE!

THAT'S RIGHT... HIC... WE SHOULD DRINK SOME MORE TO THE GODS' HEALTH!

WELL SAID! DRINKS! DRINKS!





COME ON, OLD FRIEND.
WE SHOULD GO BACK.
I DON'T WANT TO WORRY
AARICIA...

THORGAL...

SHANIAH?
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

I WAS
WAITING
FOR YOU,
THORGAL.

WAITING FOR ME?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
DID SOMETHING
HAPPEN?

I DON'T WANT TO GO
BACK TO THE VILLAGE,
THORGAL. AND I DON'T
WANT YOU TO GO BACK
EITHER...

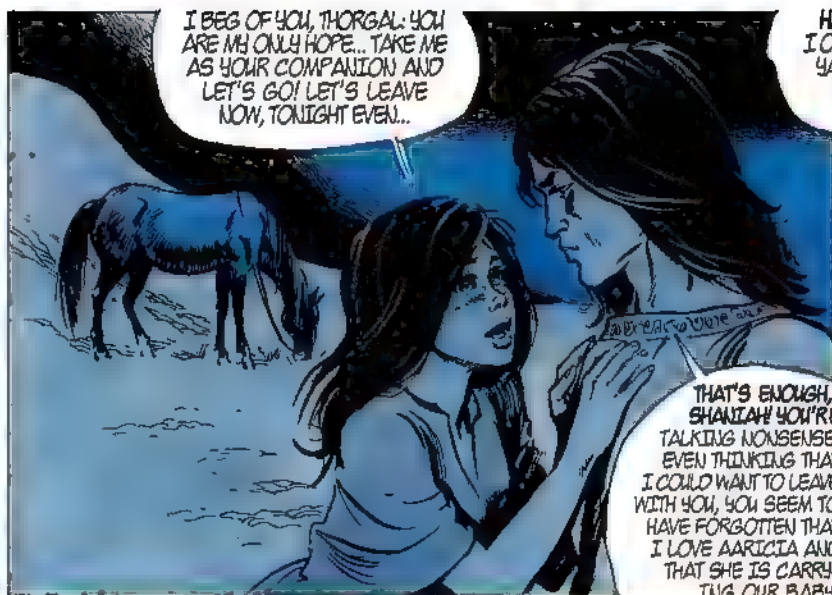
I WANT TO RUN
AWAY WITH YOU!
I WANT YOU TO
TAKE ME FAR AWAY
FROM HERE!

!?

OH, TAKE ME AWAY, THORGAL!
TAKE ME FAR AWAY, VERY FAR!
I DON'T WANT TO FINISH MY
LIFE IN THIS MISERABLE
FARMER VILLAGE! I WANT
TO SEE THE WORLD,
OTHER HORIZONS,
SEE TOWNS...

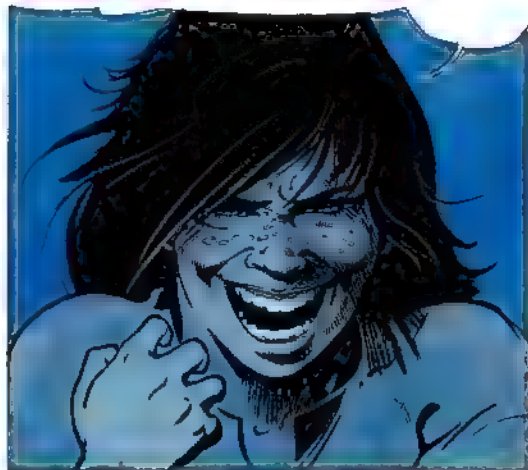
LISTEN,
LITTLE
GIRL...

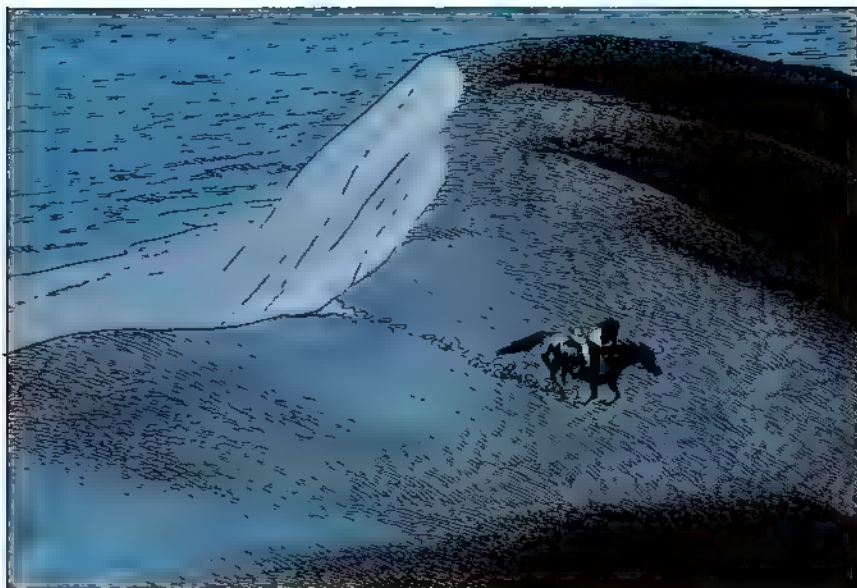
YOU TOO? I'M NOT A LITTLE GIRL ANYMORE!
I'LL SOON BE SIXTEEN AND I AM A WOMAN!
YOU HEAR ME? A WOMAN!



HAHAHA! THAT'S TOO FUNNY COMING FROM A MAN LIKE YOU! I OFFER YOU ADVENTURE AND YOU PREFER TO STAY LYING DOWN YAPPING LIKE A BEATEN DOG AT THE FEET OF A WOMAN WHO JUST ABOUT MANAGES TO DRAG HER FAT BELLY BETWEEN THE KITCHEN AND HER BED!... HAHAHA!

THAT'S ENOUGH, SHANIAH! YOU'RE TALKING NONSENSE! EVEN THINKING THAT I COULD WANT TO LEAVE WITH YOU, YOU SEEM TO HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT I LOVE AARICIA AND THAT SHE IS CARRYING OUR BABY!







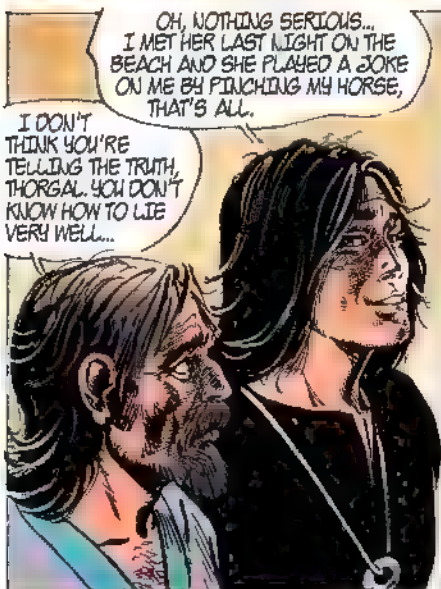


BUT, IN FACT, I WANTED TO SEE YOU. DID YOU FIND YOUR HORSE?

INDEED, I GOT UP TO SEE IF IT MADE IT BACK SAFELY. DID SHANIAH TELL YOU?

YES AND NO. SHE GOT HOME LATE LAST NIGHT WITH A BRUISE ON HER FACE. SHE TOLD ME A CONFUSED STORY IN WHICH SHE CLAIMS TO HAVE TAKEN YOUR HORSE AND TRIED TO BRING IT BACK TO THE VILLAGE, BUT SHE FELL ON THE WAY AND THE ANIMAL RAN OFF...

WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED, THORGAL?



OH, NOTHING SERIOUS... I MET HER LAST NIGHT ON THE BEACH AND SHE PLAYED A JOKE ON ME BY PINCHING MY HORSE, THAT'S ALL.

I DON'T THINK YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH, THORGAL. YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO LIE VERY WELL...

BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT! IF YOUR HORSE IS LOST, MY GIRL HAS MADE A BIG MISTAKE, VERY BIG, AND I'LL PUNISH HER ACCORDINGLY.



ERR... DON'T BE TOO HARD ON HER, CALEB. AFTER ALL, SHE'S STILL A CHILD...

AND ANYWAY, THE HORSE COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN VERY FAR AWAY. WE'LL FIND IT EASILY...

CALEB, CALEB! HORSEMEN ARE APPROACHING THE VILLAGE!



WHAT?!



THERE ARE FIVE OF THEM... THEY SEEM TO BE ARMED TO THEIR TEETH...



HHMM... I DON'T LIKE THIS. I DON'T LIKE THIS AT ALL...



MY SALUTATIONS, POWERFUL LORD. I AM CALEB, CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE, HAPPY TO WELCOME YOU. ALAS, WE ARE POOR AND WE CAN'T...

THE WEALTH OF YOUR VILLAGE DOESN'T INTEREST ME, PEASANT. BEFORE YOU IS EWING, JARL* TO THE COURT OF SHARDAR THE POWERFUL, KING OF BREK ZARITH AND OF OTHER LANDS BEYOND THE OCEAN...



WE'RE LOOKING FOR AN ESCAPED PRISONER. HE'S A VERY DANGEROUS CRIMINAL WHO MAY HAVE FOUND REFUGE IN THIS VILLAGE.

WE HAVE SEEN NO MAN OF THIS KIND, LORD, I CAN PROMISE YOU.



I HOPE FOR YOUR SAKE THAT YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH. WE'LL HAVE A LOOK AROUND THESE HOVELS, AND IF YOU'VE LIED AT ALL...

DID YOUR PRISONER HAVE WHITE HAIR AND BROKEN CHAINS ON HIS WRISTS?



THAT'S HIM! SPEAK, MY GIRL! QUICKLY, WHERE IS HE?

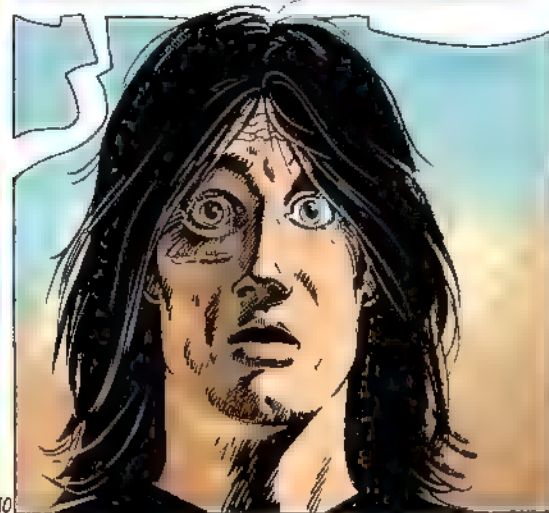
SHANIAH, HAVE... HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN?...

YES, I SAW HIM, BUT HE'S FAR AWAY NOW. ONE OF OUR PEOPLE WAITED FOR HIM LAST NIGHT ON THE BEACH TO GIVE HIM HIS HORSE SO THAT HE COULD GET AWAY. WHEN THIS WRETCH FOUND OUT THAT I SAW HIM, HE HIT ME TO SCARE ME AND KEEP ME QUIET...

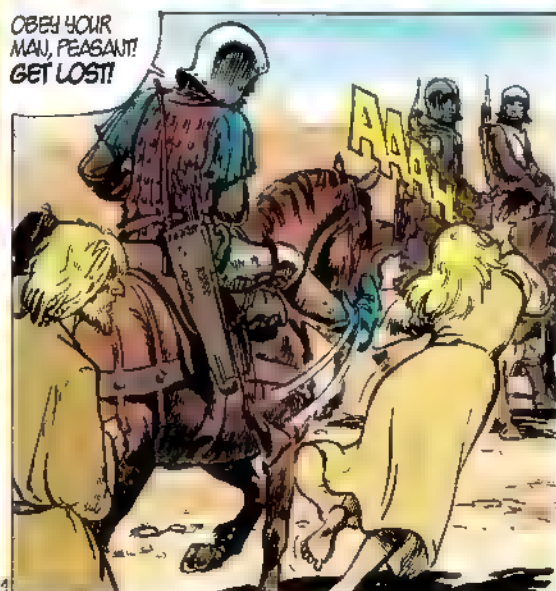
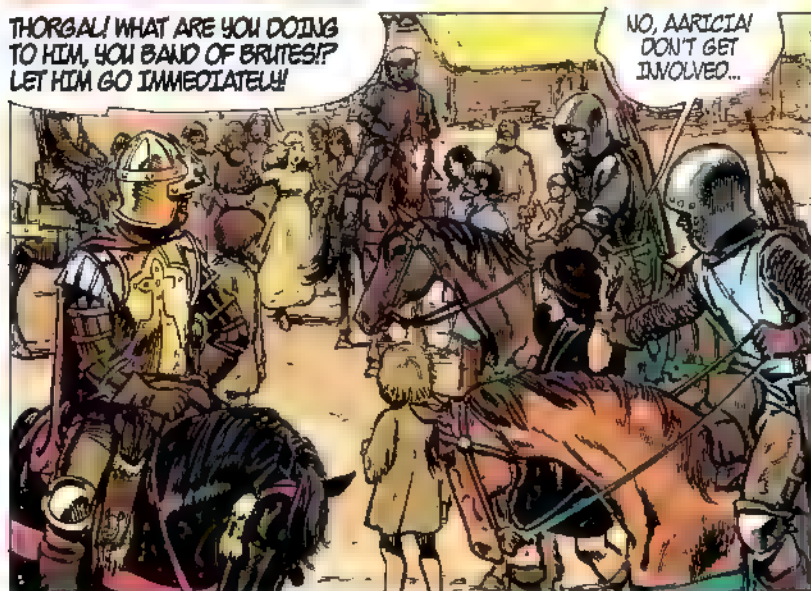
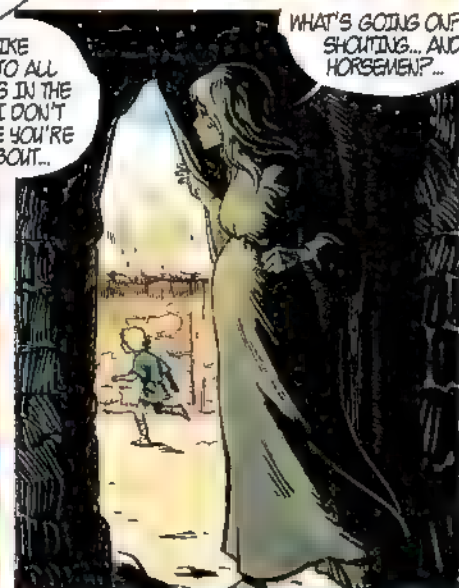
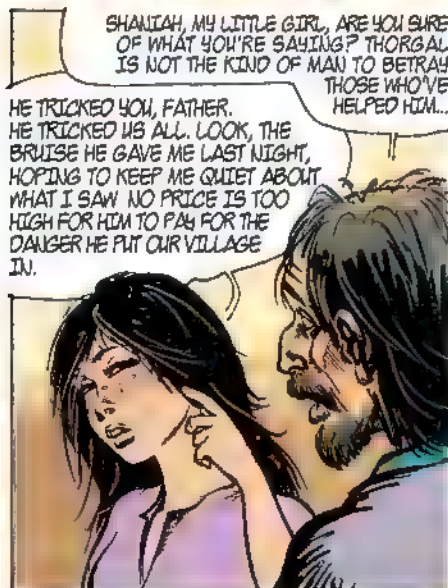
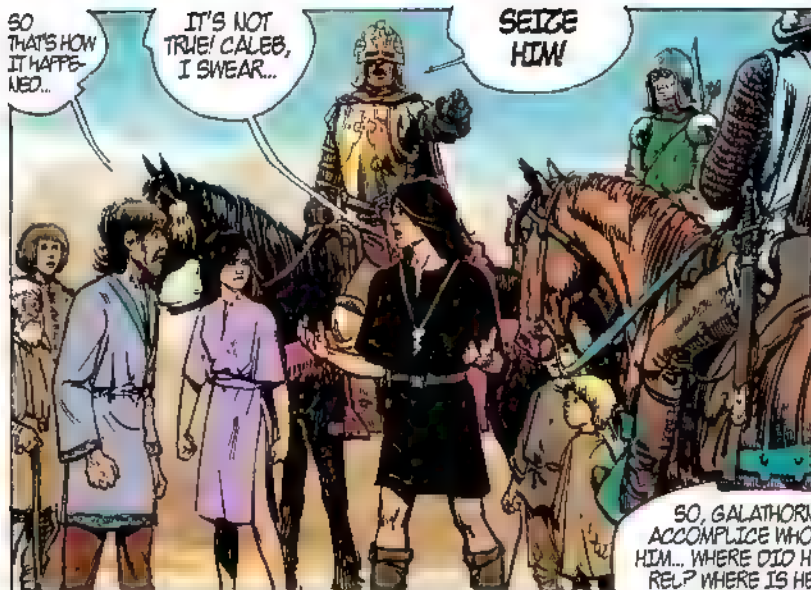


ONE OF OUR PEOPLE? ARE YOU MAD? WHO? WHO COULD HAVE...?

THAT MAN THERE, TO WHOM YOU EVEN HAD THE WEAKNESS TO OFFER OUR VILLAGE'S HOSPITALITY, FATHER. THIS FOREIGNER WHO CALLS HIMSELF THORGAL AEGIRSSON

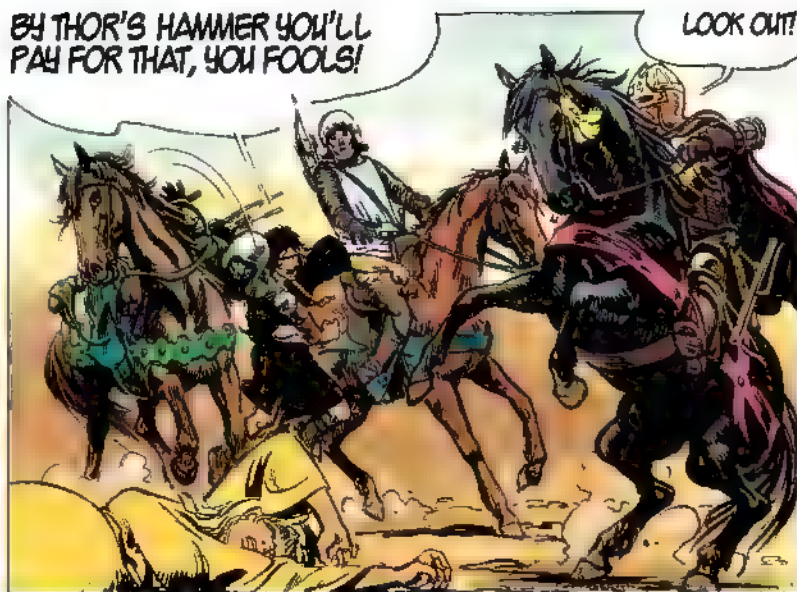


*EARL



BY THOR'S HAMMER YOU'LL
PAY FOR THAT, YOU FOOLS!

LOOK OUT!



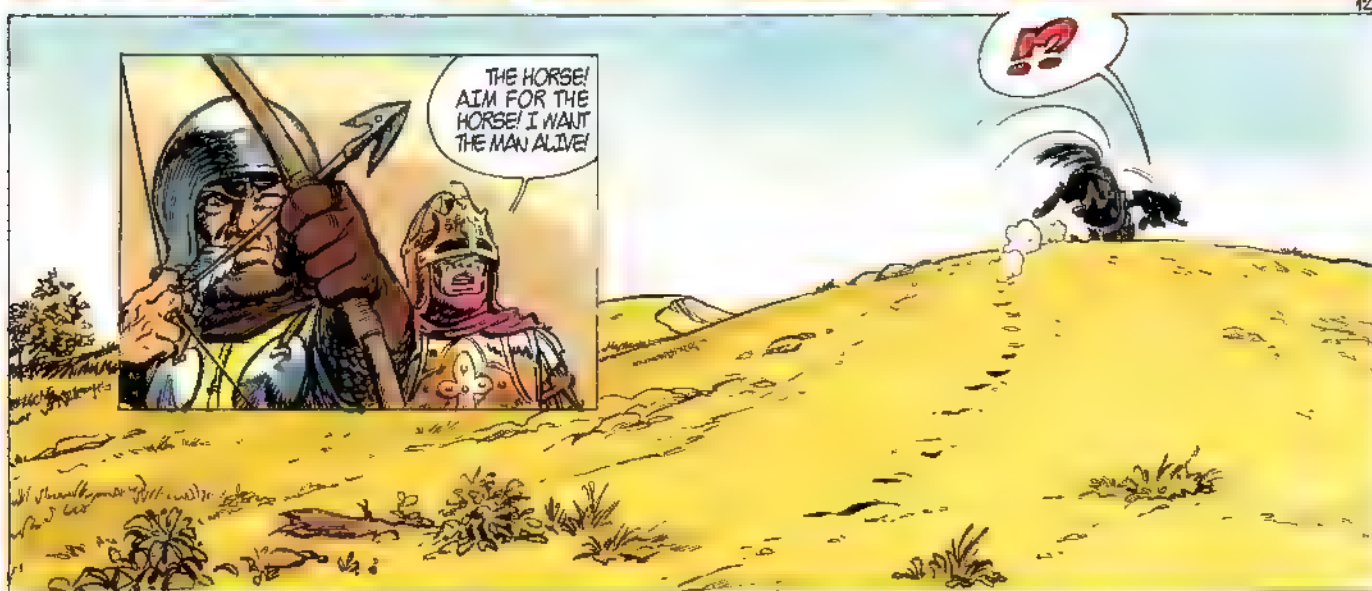
TAKE
THIS...!



YOU TAKE IT, SCUM!
FOLLOW ME IF YOU
DARE!



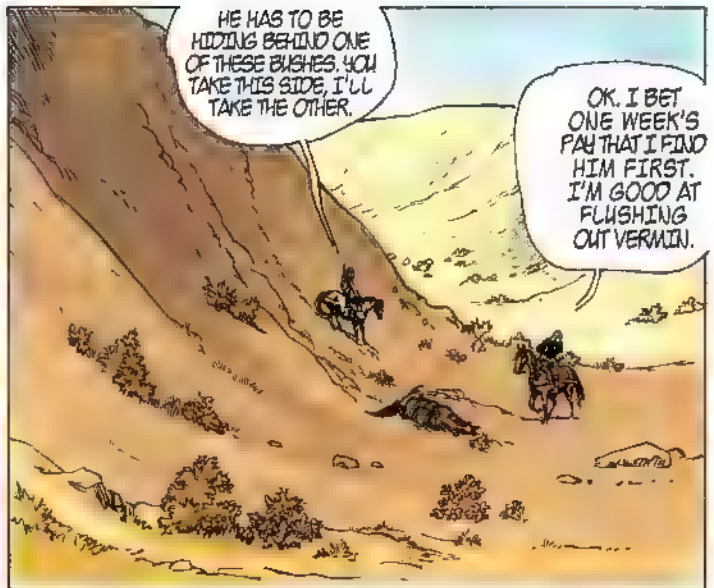
THE HORSE!
AIM FOR THE
HORSE! I WANT
THE MAN ALIVE!





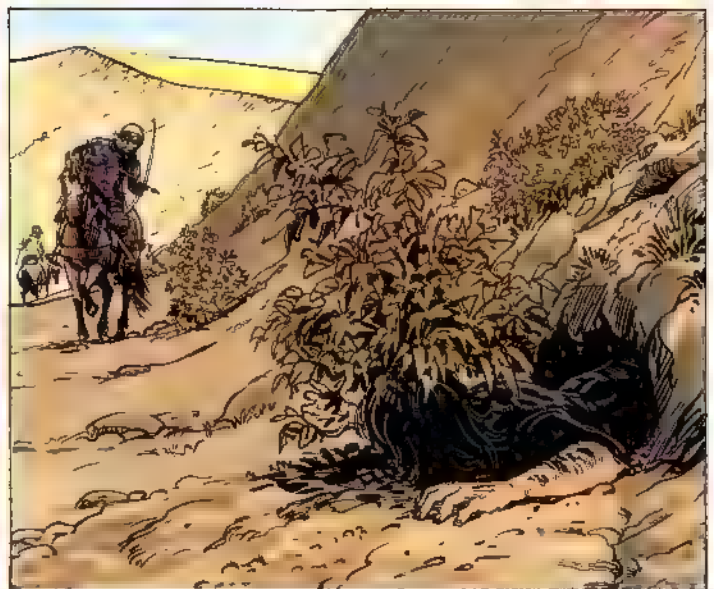
WELL,
NOW HE'S
DISAPPEARED!

BAH!
HE CAN'T
HAVE GONE
TOO FAR...



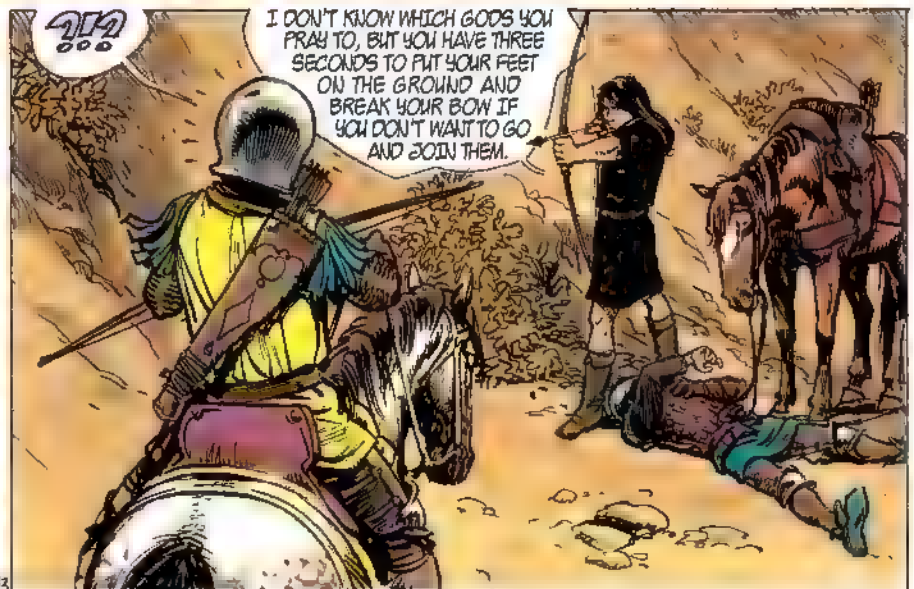
HE HAS TO BE
HIDING BEHIND ONE
OF THESE BUSHES. YOU
TAKE THIS SIDE, I'LL
TAKE THE OTHER.

OK. I BET
ONE WEEK'S
PAY THAT I FIND
HIM FIRST.
I'M GOOD AT
FLUSHING
OUT VERMIN.



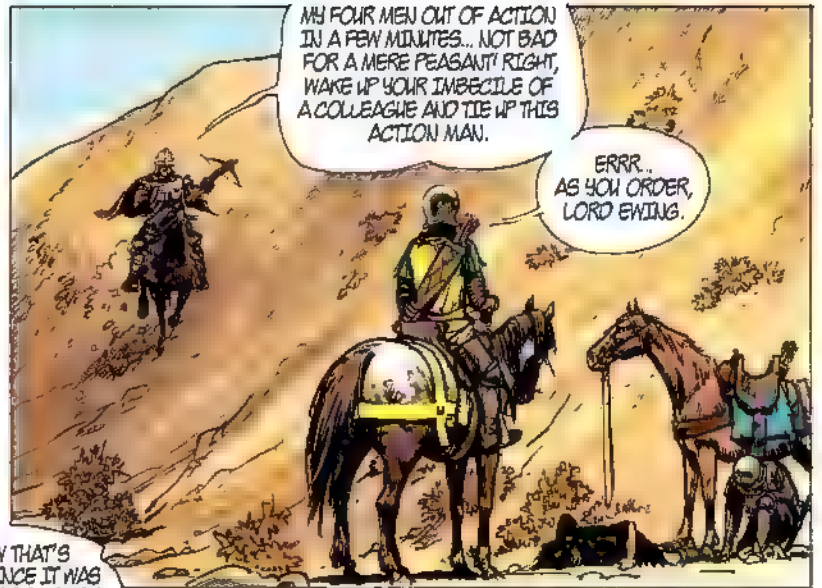
AARGH...

ALREADY?
LUCKY DEVIL,
YOU WON
AGAIN...



???

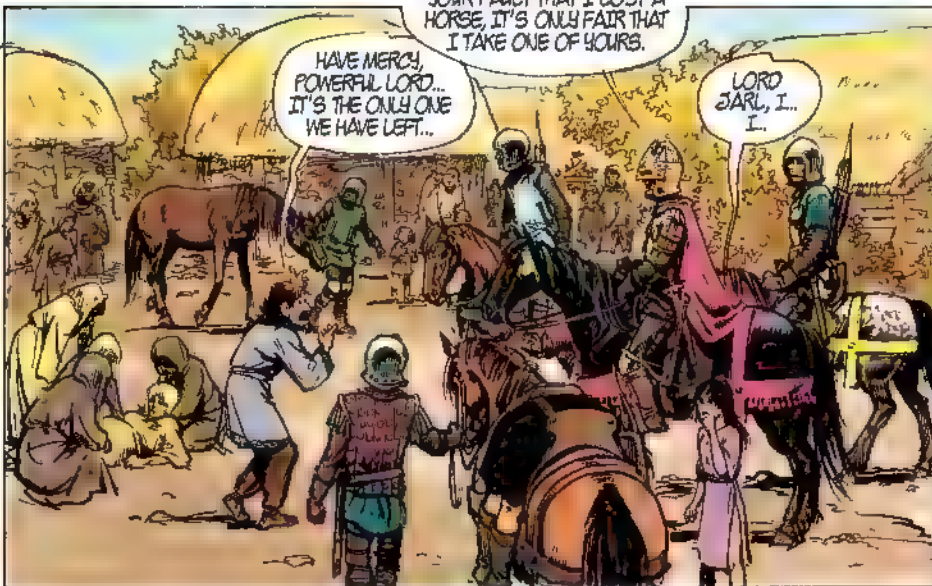
I DON'T KNOW WHICH GODS YOU
PRAY TO, BUT YOU HAVE THREE
SECONDS TO PUT YOUR FEET
ON THE GROUND AND
BREAK YOUR BOW IF
YOU DON'T WANT TO GO
AND JOIN THEM.



MY FOUR MEN OUT OF ACTION IN A FEW MINUTES... NOT BAD FOR A MERE PEASANT! RIGHT, WAKE UP YOUR INBECILE OF A COLLEAGUE AND TIE UP THIS ACTION MAN.

ERRR... AS YOU ORDER, LORD EATING.

THERE, NOW THAT'S SORTED OUT. SINCE IT WAS YOUR FAULT THAT I LOST A HORSE, IT'S ONLY FAIR THAT I TAKE ONE OF YOURS.



HAVE MERCY, POWERFUL LORD... IT'S THE ONLY ONE WE HAVE LEFT...

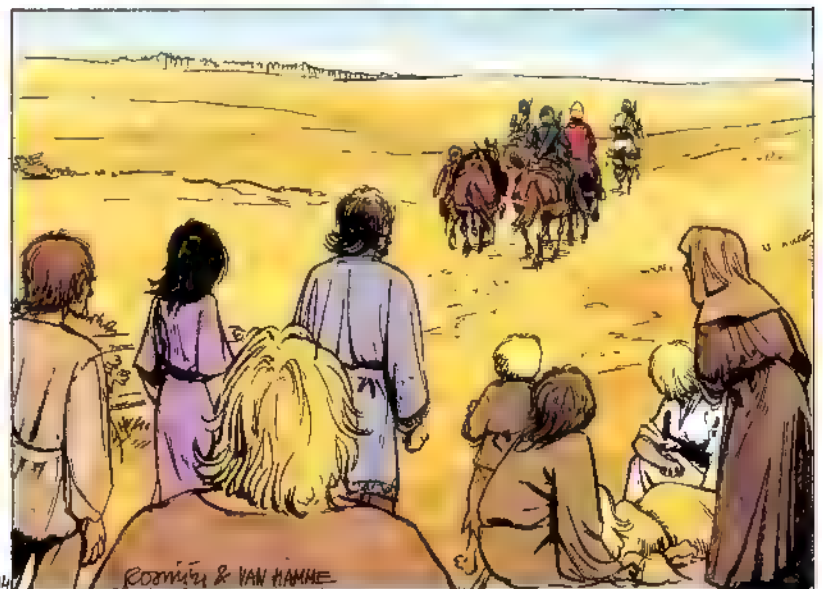
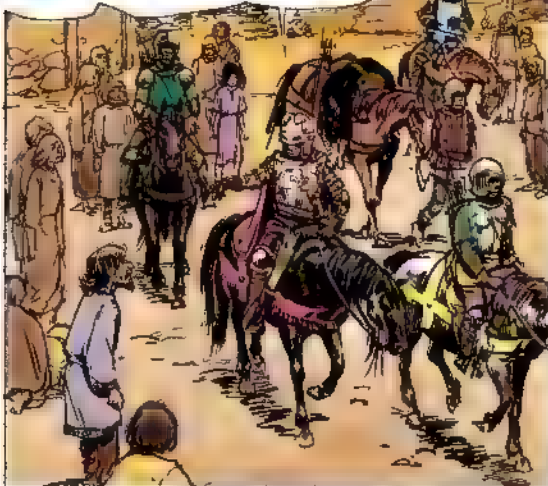
LORD JARL, I... I...

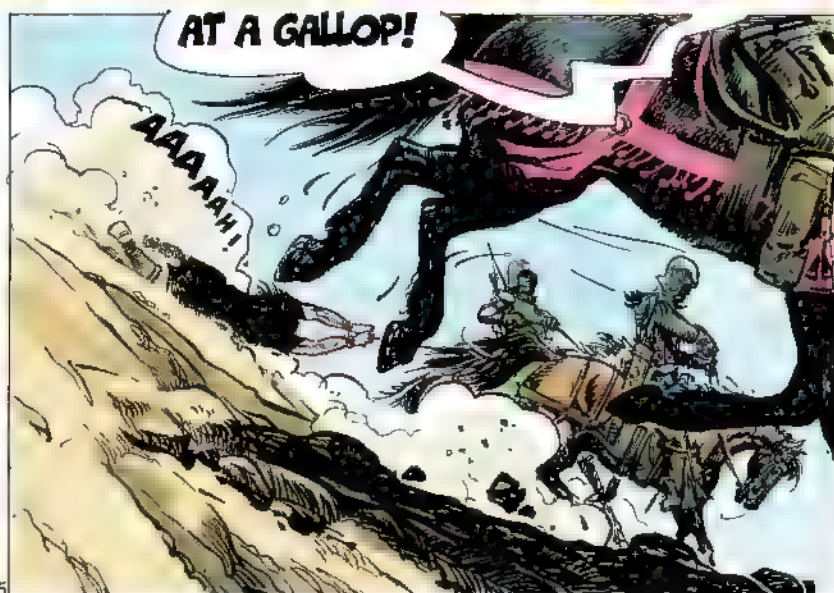
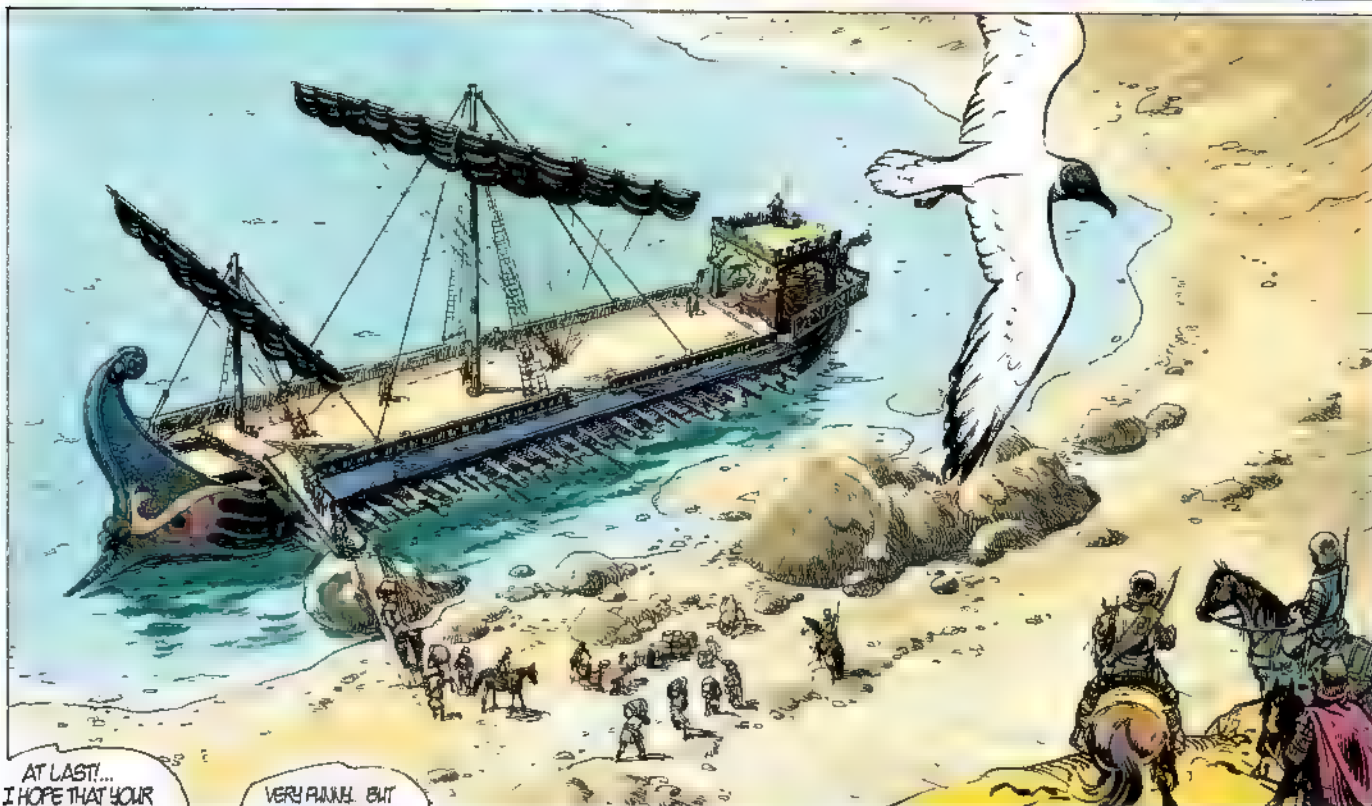
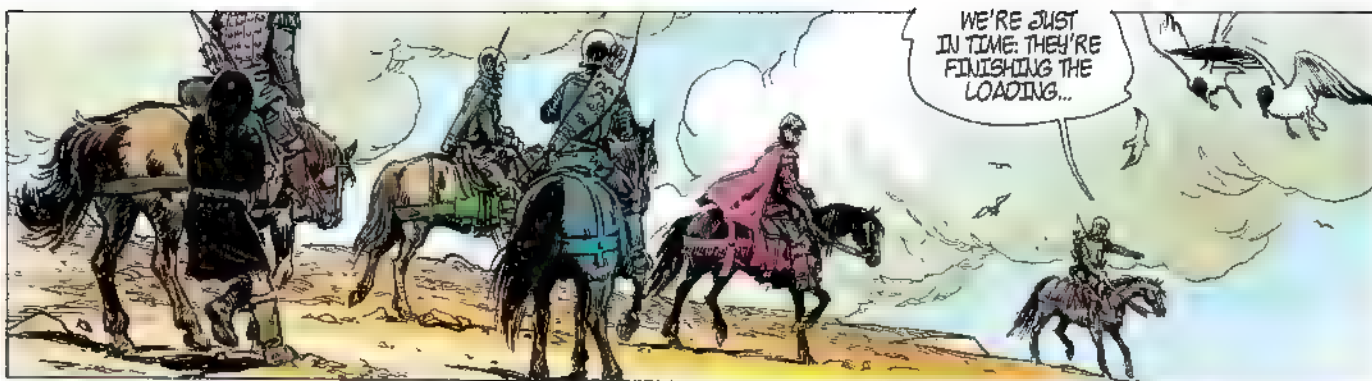


YOU HAVE SOMETHING ELSE TO TELL US? SPEAK WITHOUT FEAR, LITTLE ONE...

NO, I... I'VE NOTHING ELSE TO SAY...

RIGHT, IN THAT CASE, WE'RE LEAVING. AS FOR YOU, OLD CHAP, COUNT YOURSELF LUCKY TO HAVE KEPT YOUR VILLAGE AND HARVEST INTACT.







AH, THERE YOU ARE...
WE HAD TO GET STARTED
WITHOUT YOU, JARL EWING.
YOU CAUGHT THE FUGITIVE,
OF COURSE...

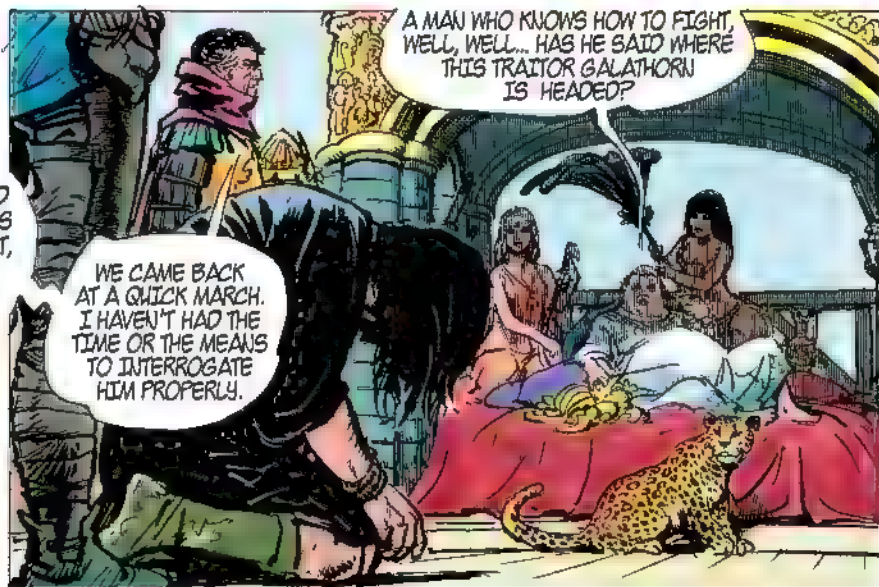
ALAS,
NO, MY
LORD.

IT SEEMS THAT GALATHORN HAD PREPARED HIS ESCAPE
BETTER THAN WE THOUGHT. AN ACCOMPLICE WAS WAIT-
ING FOR HIM IN A COASTAL VILLAGE TO GIVE HIM
A HORSE. HE WILL BE FAR AWAY NOW.

THAT'S
ANNOYING,
EWING, MOST
ANNOYING. AND
THIS ACCOM-
PLICE?...



HERE HE IS,
MY LORD! HE TRIED
TO PRETEND HE WAS
A SIMPLE PEASANT,
BUT HE FIGHTS A
LITTLE TOO WELL
FOR THAT...



A MAN WHO KNOWS HOW TO FIGHT,
WELL, WELL... HAS HE SAID WHERE
THIS TRAITOR GALATHORN
IS HEADED?

WE CAME BACK
AT A QUICK MARCH.
I HAVEN'T HAD THE
TIME OR THE MEANS
TO INTERROGATE
HIM PROPERLY.



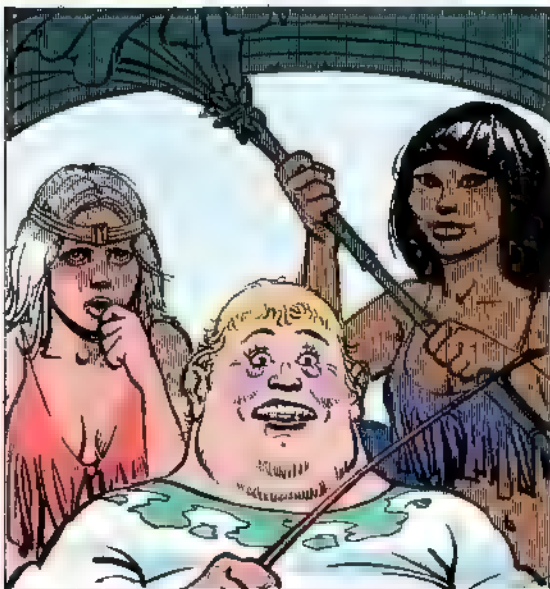
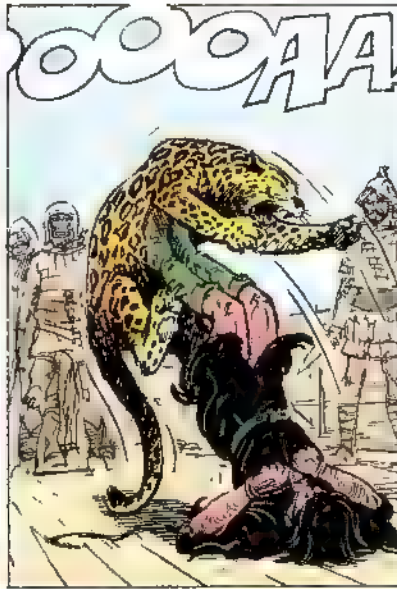
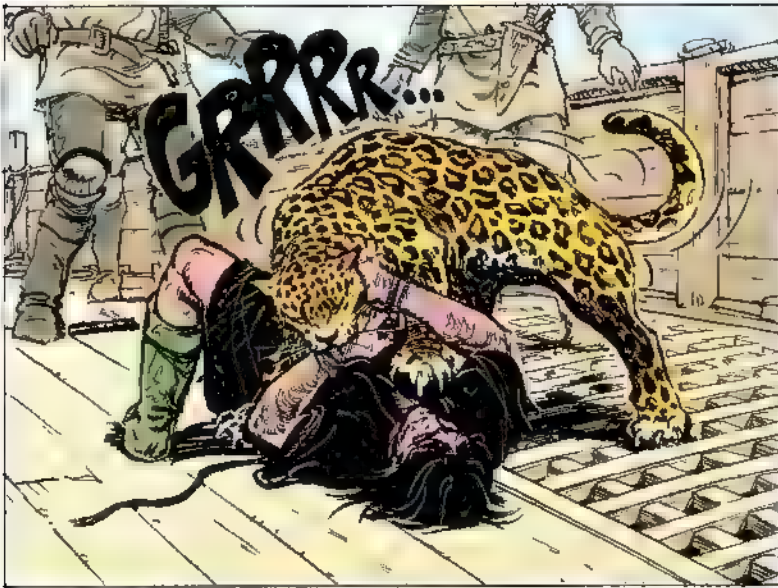
BAH! MY FATHER'S TORTURERS WILL
FIND THAT OUT LATER. BUT LET'S NOT
WASTE ANY MORE TIME AND LEAVE
THIS LAND OF SAVAGES
QUICKLY...

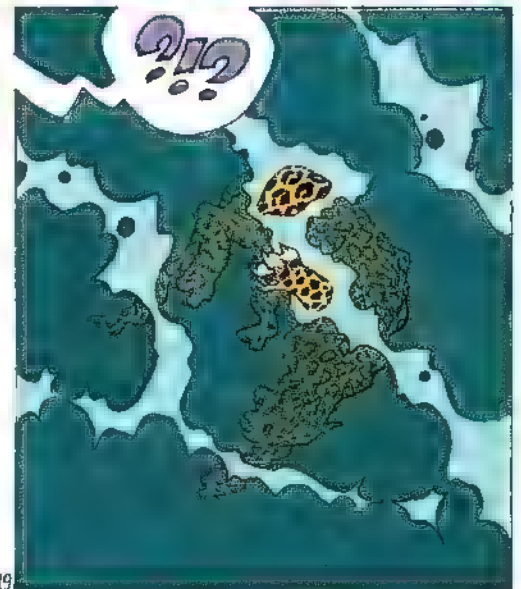
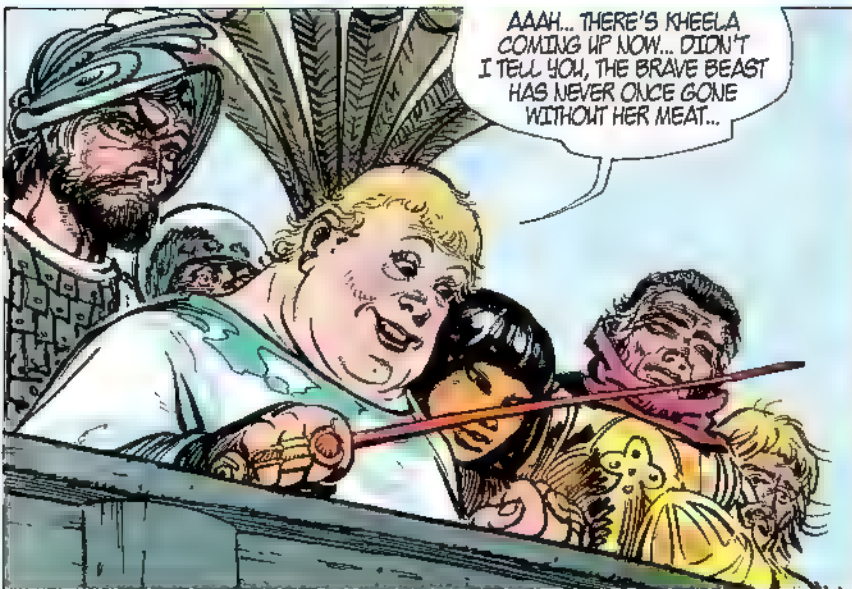
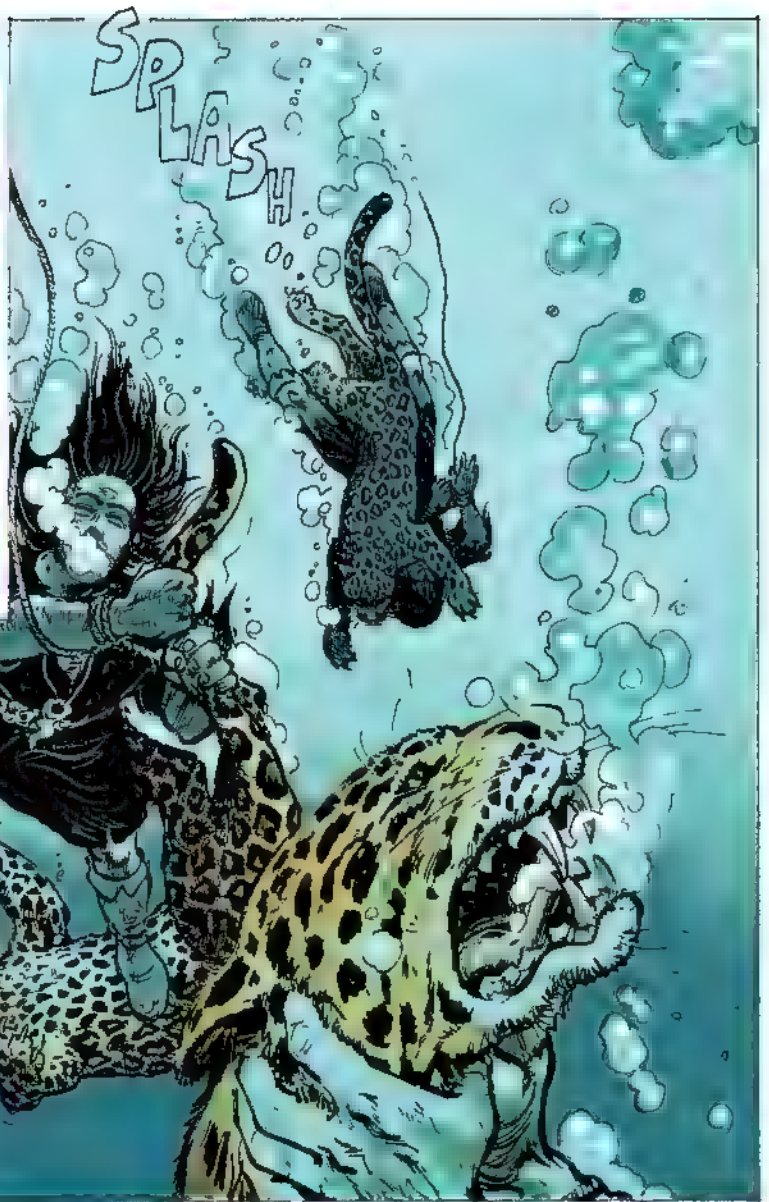
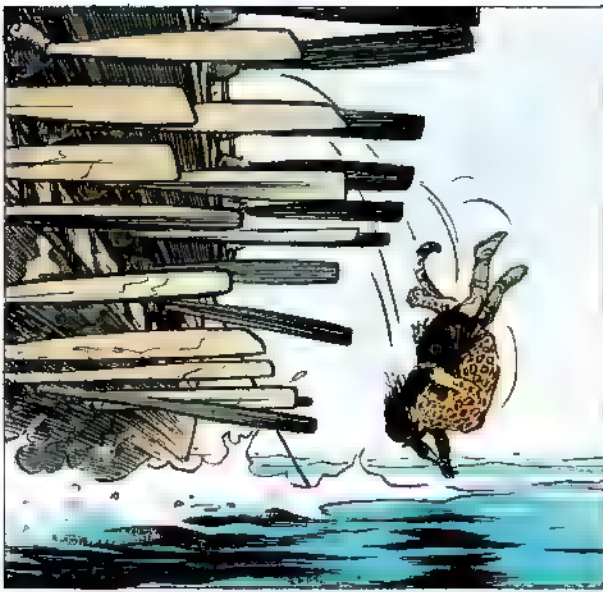
ONE
MOMENT,
PRINCE
VERONARI!



I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HAVE
THE CHANCE TO SAY SOMETHING,
IF THAT DOESN'T UPSET YOUR
DIGESTION TOO MUCH. AFTER
ALL, I AM THE PERSON
CONCERNED...

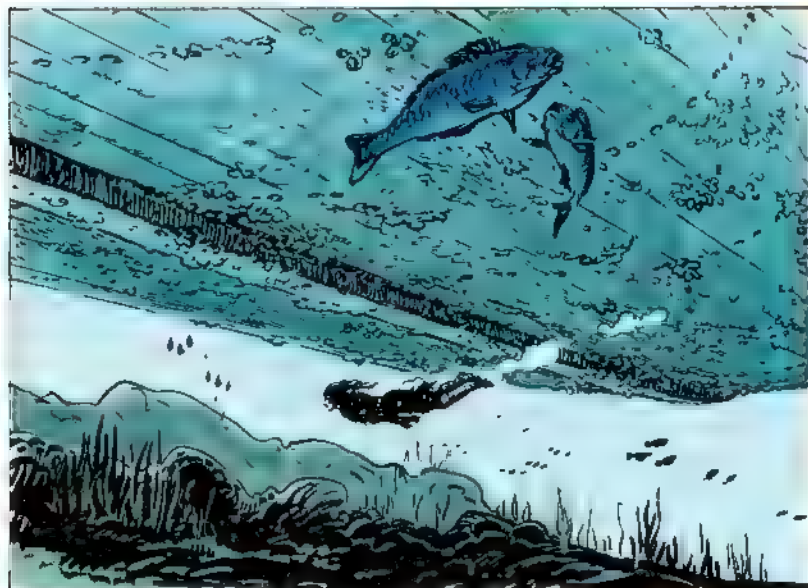
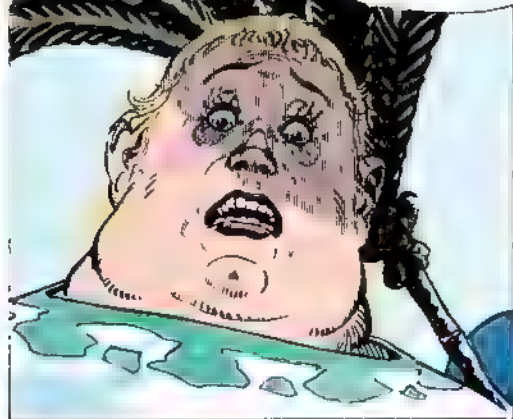






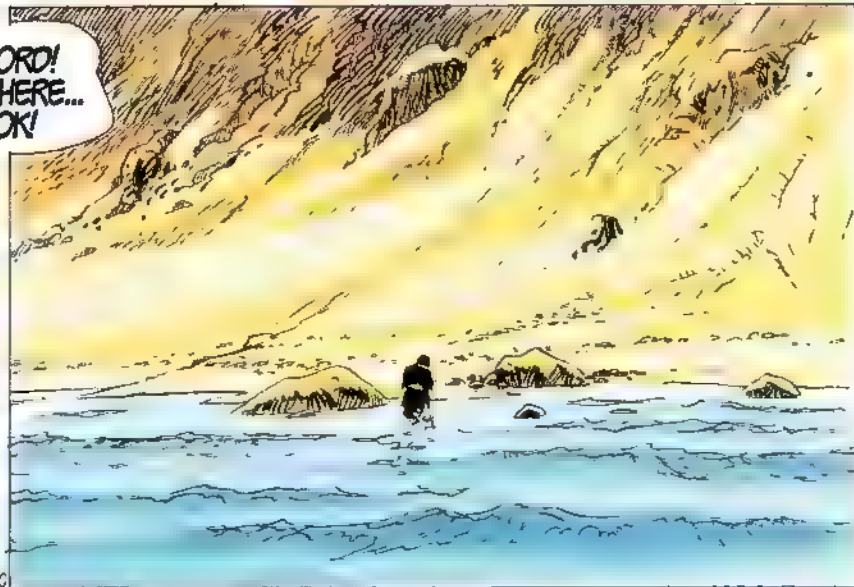
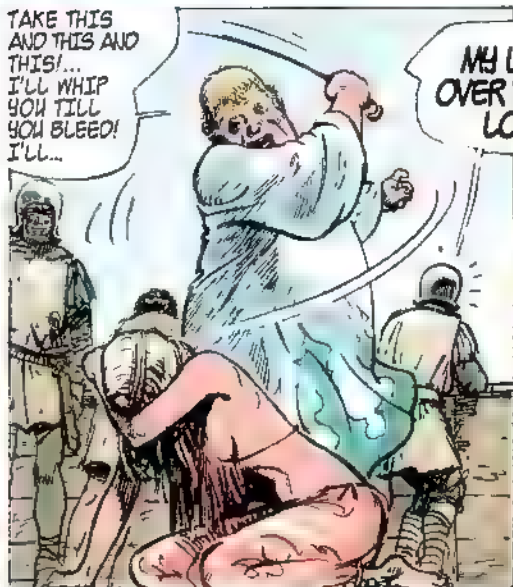
THE...THE MONSTER
DARED! HE DARED
TO KILL MY
DARLING!...

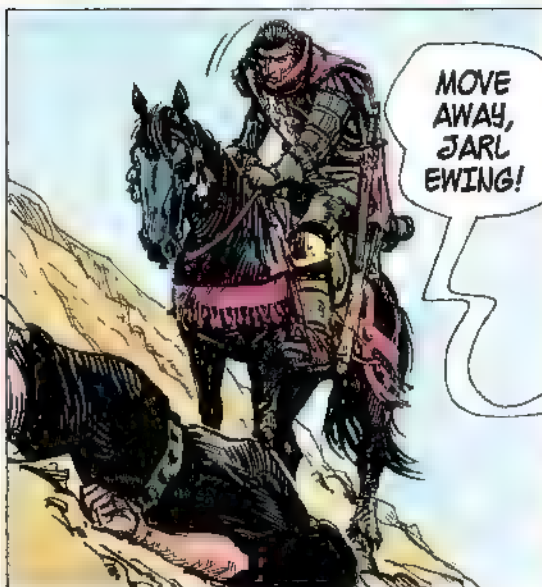
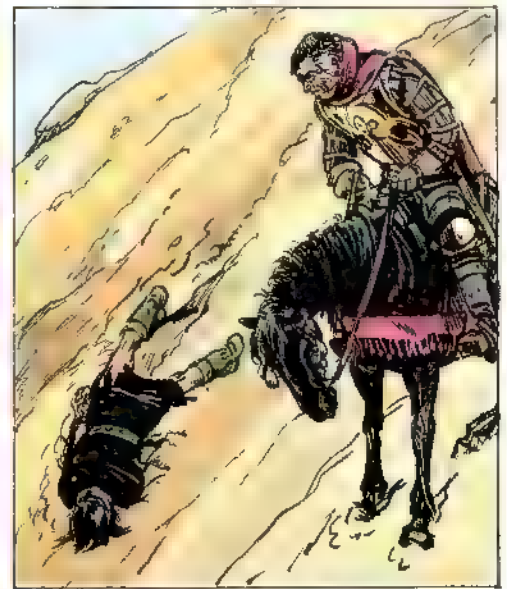
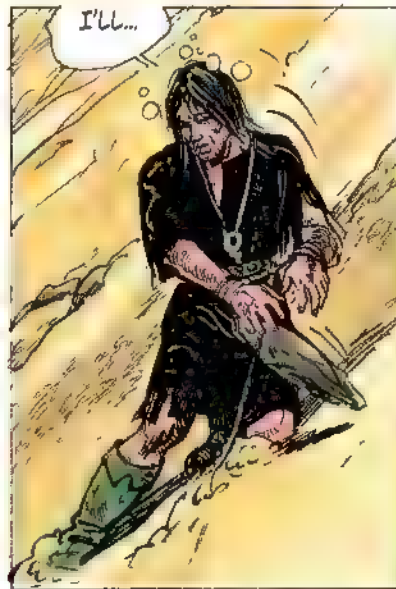
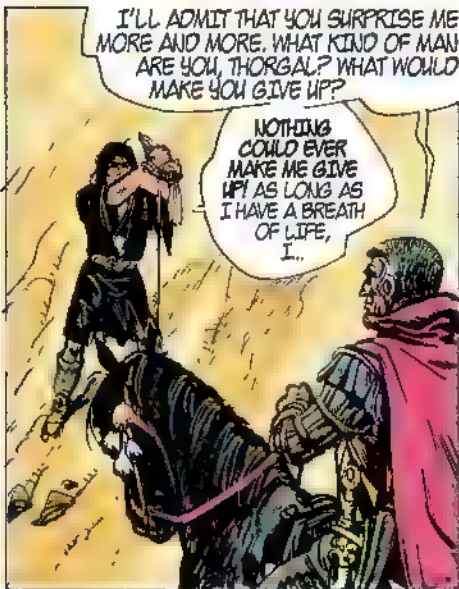
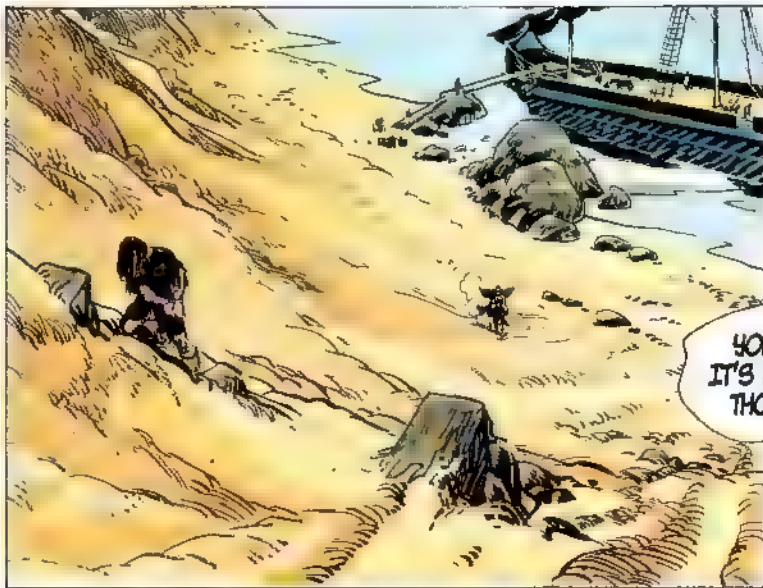
FIND HIM! CATCH HIM! IF THIS
WRETCHED DOG IS STILL ALIVE,
I WANT TO RIP OUT HIS
HEART WITH MY
OWN HANDS!



TAKE THIS
AND THIS AND
THIS!...
I'LL WHIP
YOU TILL
YOU BLEED!
I'LL...

MY LORD!
OVER THERE...
LOOK!







SETTLE DOWN,
PRINCE...



HAVE YOU
GONE MAD,
EWING?
YOU... YOU DARE TO...?!

I DON'T THINK THAT
KING SHARDAR, YOUR
FATHER, WOULD LIKE TO
HEAR THAT YOU KILLED
THE ONLY MAN WHO CAN
TELL YOU WHERE
GALATHORN IS
HIDING.



YOU AND YOUR
ARROGANT WAYS!...
I'LL KILL YOU FOR
WHAT YOU JUST DID,
EWING! I'LL... I...

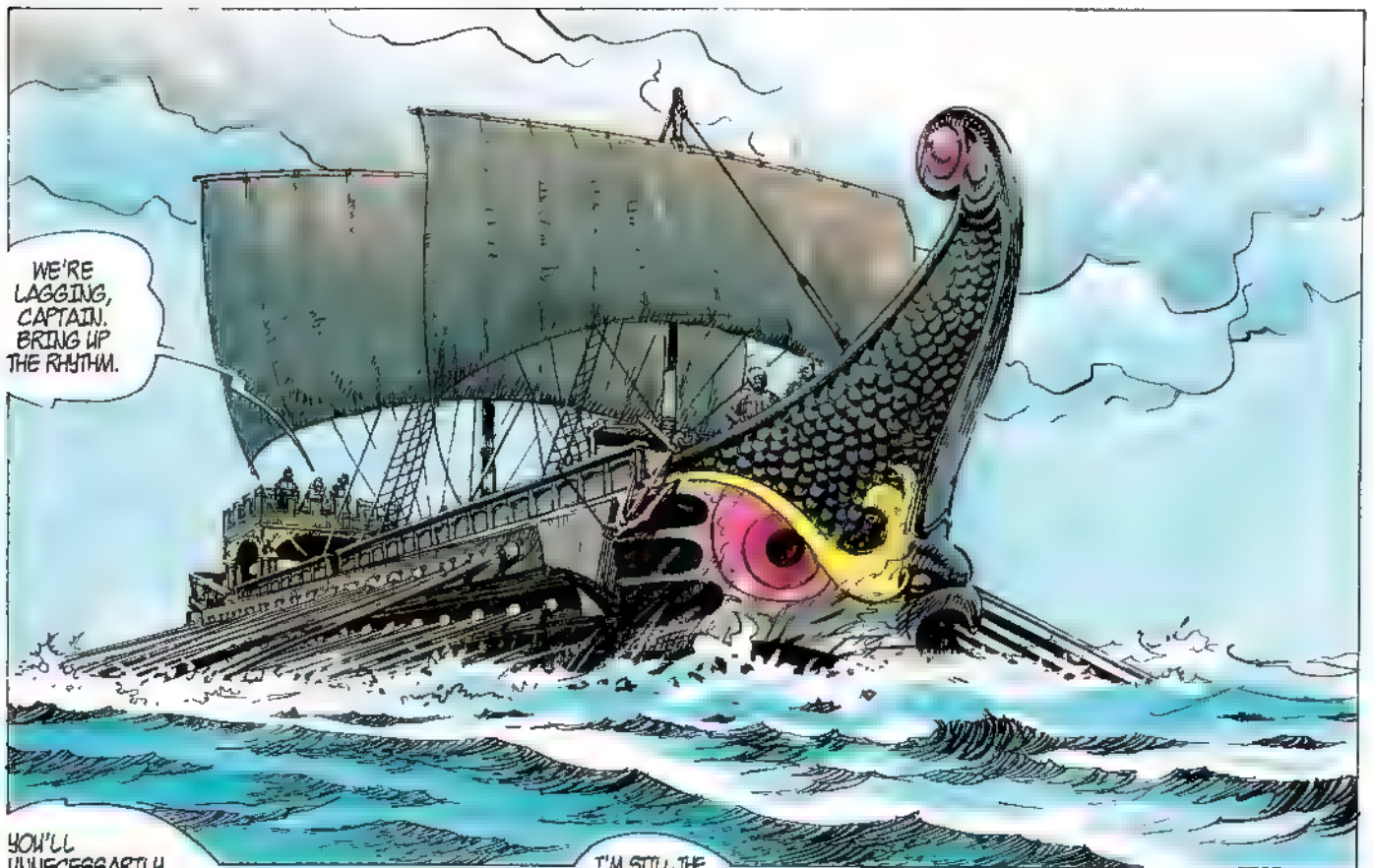


AAH, I HATE YOU,
I HATE YOU!
I HATE
YOU!



WELL, WHAT ARE YOU
LOT WAITING FOR?
LOAD UP THIS PRISONER
AND PUT THE HORSES
IN THE HOLD. WE'RE
SETTING SAIL!





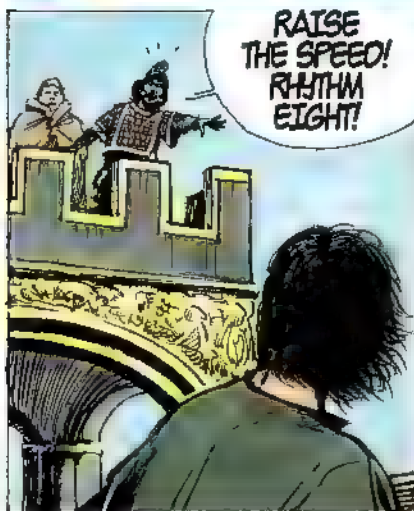
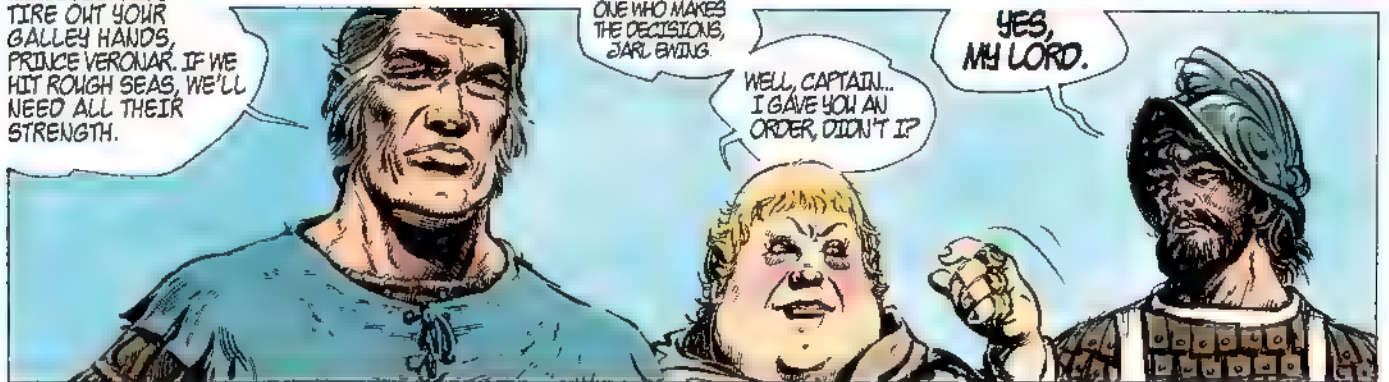
WE'RE
LAGGING,
CAPTAIN.
BRING UP
THE RHYTHM.

YOU'LL
UNNECESSARILY
TIRE OUT YOUR
GALLEY HANDS,
PRINCE VERONAR. IF WE
HIT ROUGH SEAS, WE'LL
NEED ALL THEIR
STRENGTH.

I'M STILL THE
ONE WHO MAKES
THE DECISIONS,
JARL EYING.

WELL, CAPTAIN...
I GAVE YOU AN
ORDER, DIDN'T I?

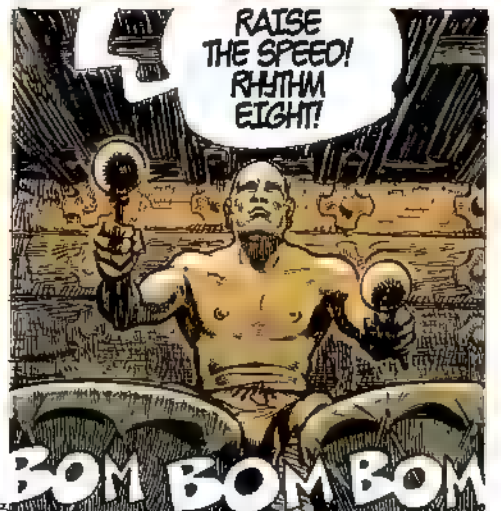
YES,
MY LORD.



RAISE
THE SPEED!
RHYTHM
EIGHT!



RAISE
THE SPEED!
RHYTHM
EIGHT!



RAISE
THE SPEED!
RHYTHM
EIGHT!

BOM BOM BOM

BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM



FASTER,
BUNCH OF
SLACKERS!
FASTER, MANGY
DOGS, RESPECT
THE RHYTHM!

BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM BOM



FASTER!
FASTER!

SCHLAC



NO! NO! I BEG OF YOU!... THEY'LL BEAT US TO DEATH!



WE CAN'T... DO ANYTHING... NOTHING... ONLY OBEY AND STARVE... LIKE RATS...



THIS RHYTHM... THEY'RE MAD! I COULD... NEVER...

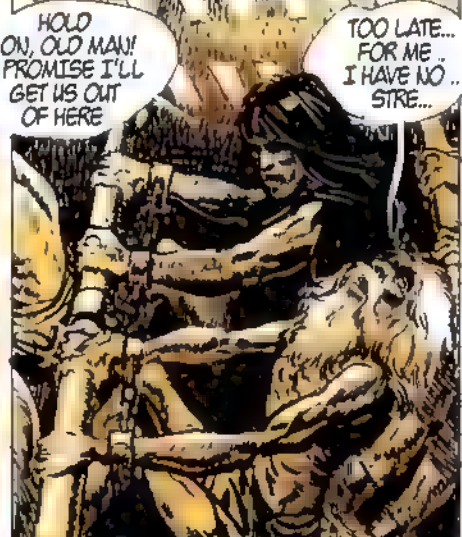
BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM



SCHLAC



THE RHYTHM, YOU ROTTERS! FASTER! FASTER!



HOLD ON, OLD MAN! I PROMISE I'LL GET US OUT OF HERE

TOO LATE... FOR ME... I HAVE NO STRE...

BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM-BOM



HEY! OLD MAN...



SCHLAC

ROW, YOU DOG! LOOKS LIKE YOU STILL NEED TRAINING!

VILE SWINE! CAN'T YOU SEE THAT THIS MAN IS DEAD?



UNLUCKY FOR YOU, MY FRIEND! HAH! YOU'LL HAVE TO ROW FOR TWO UNTIL THE BREAK.



ROW ON, VERMIN!



SCHLAC

AAAAHHH

HEY!



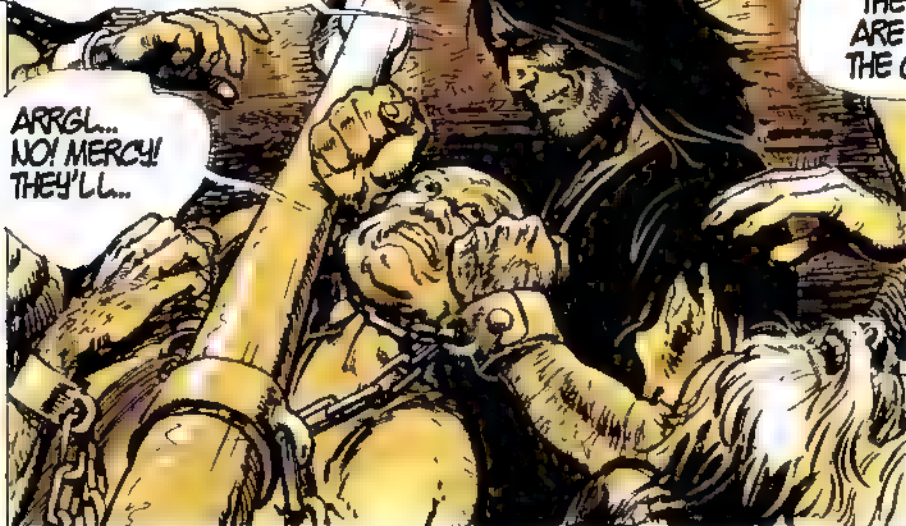
QUICK!
HIS
KNIFE!



SLIT
THIS PIG'S
THROAT!

LET HIM
PAY FOR THE
OTHERS!

WHAT'S UP, MY FRIEND? I DON'T HEAR YOU LAUGHING NOW...



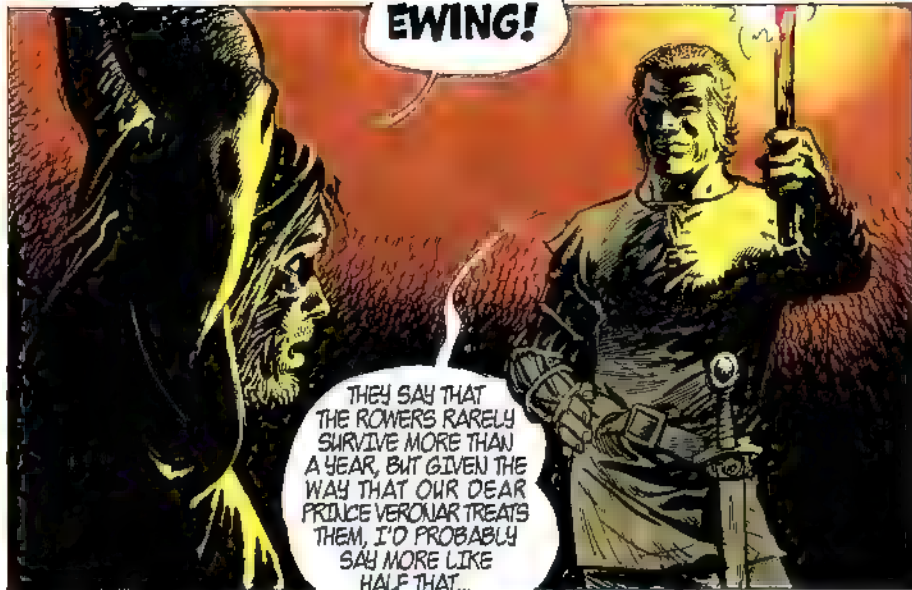
ARRGL...
NO! MERCY!
THEY'LL...

LOOK OUT!
THE GUARDS
ARE COMING!
THE GUARDS!...





WELL THEN, THORGAL, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF LIFE ABOARD A GALLEY? IDEAL FOR SOMEONE WHO LIKES TO EXERCISE, ISN'T IT?



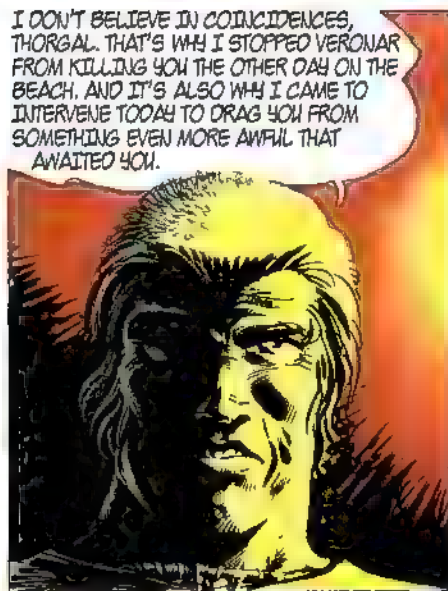
EWING!

THEY SAY THAT THE ROWERS RARELY SURVIVE MORE THAN A YEAR, BUT GIVEN THE WAY THAT OUR DEAR PRINCE VERONAR TREATS THEM, I'D PROBABLY SAY MORE LIKE HALF THAT...

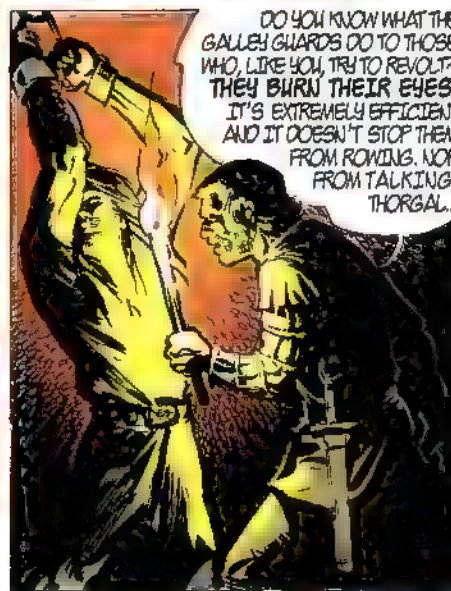


WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT, EARL EWING? YOU'RE THE REASON THAT I'M HERE. YOU DRAGGED ME FROM MY VILLAGE FOR NO REASON, FROM MY WIFE, MY SOON-TO-BE BORN CHILD...

REALLY FOR NO REASON?



I DON'T BELIEVE IN COINCIDENCES, THORGAL. THAT'S WHY I STOPPED VERONAR FROM KILLING YOU THE OTHER DAY ON THE BEACH. AND IT'S ALSO WHY I CAME TO INTERVENE TODAY TO DRAG YOU FROM SOMETHING EVEN MORE AWFUL THAT AWAITED YOU.



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE GALLEY GUARDS DO TO THOSE WHO, LIKE YOU, TRY TO REVOLT? THEY BURN THEIR EYES! IT'S EXTREMELY EFFICIENT AND IT DOESN'T STOP THEM FROM ROWING. NOR FROM TALKING, THORGAL...

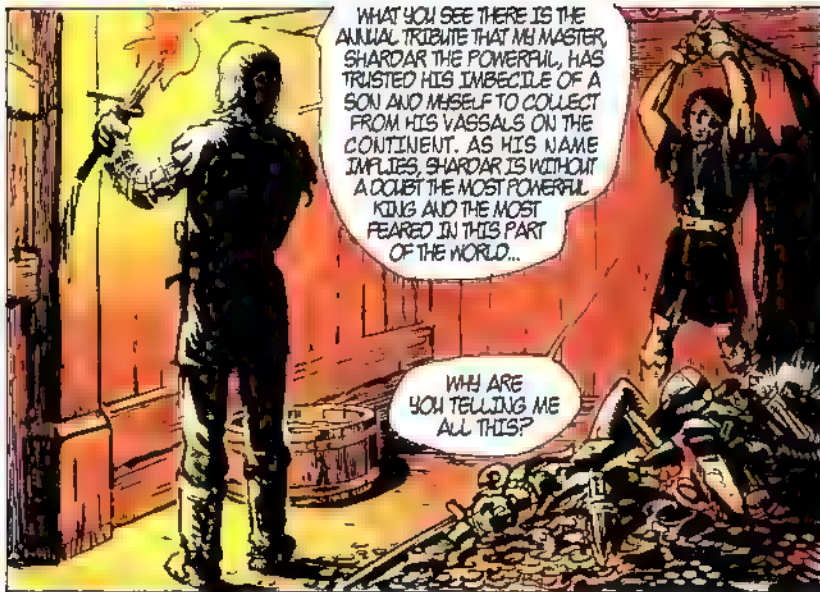


I SUPPOSE YOU WANT ME TO THANK YOU?

NOT YET. PERHAPS I'LL LET THEM DO IT AFTER ALL. THAT DEPENDS ON YOU. BUT BEFORE YOU GO BLIND...



I WOULD LIKE YOU TO HAVE A GOOD LOOK AT THIS LOT!



WHAT YOU SEE THERE IS THE ANNUAL TRIBUTE THAT MY MASTER, SHARDAR THE POWERFUL, HAS TRUSTED HIS IMBECILE OF A SON AND MYSELF TO COLLECT FROM HIS VASSALS ON THE CONTINENT. AS HIS NAME IMPLIES, SHARDAR IS WITHOUT A DOUBT THE MOST POWERFUL KING AND THE MOST FEARED IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD...

WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME ALL THIS?

BECAUSE THERE'S A MAN CAPABLE OF WEAKENING THIS POWER... A MAN WHO WAS A PRISONER ON THIS VERY GALLEY AND WHO MANAGED TO ESCAPE. GALATHORN! THE MAN YOU HELPED TO FLEE BY GIVING HIM YOUR HORSE, THORGAL...



I TOLD YOU A HUNDRED TIMES THAT I DIDN'T...

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND A THING, DO YOU, IDIOT?

WHY DO YOU THINK I BROUGHT YOU INTO THIS HOLD, FAR FROM LISTENING EARS? I DON'T WANT TO FIND GALATHORN TO HURT HIM BUT TO SIDE WITH HIM!



TELL ME THE WAY TO FIND HIM AND I'LL TELL YOU THE WAY TO ESCAPE. THE COAST IS NEAR HERE, AND A GOOD SWIMMER SHOULD BE ABLE TO REACH IT. IF YOU REFUSE, I'LL ABANDON YOU TO THE GALLEY TORTURERS.

YOU SPEAK AS IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE CAMPS, BUT HOW CAN YOU PROVE YOUR SINCERITY TO ME?

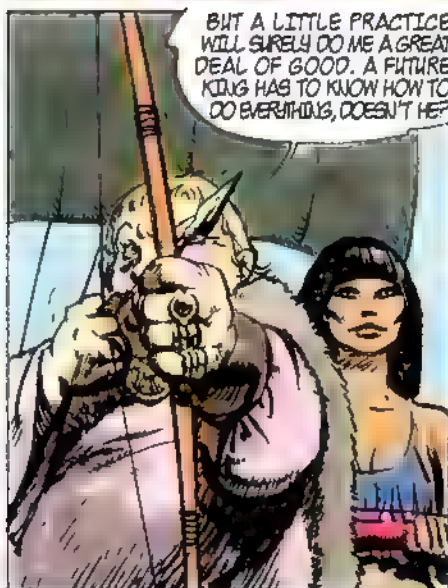
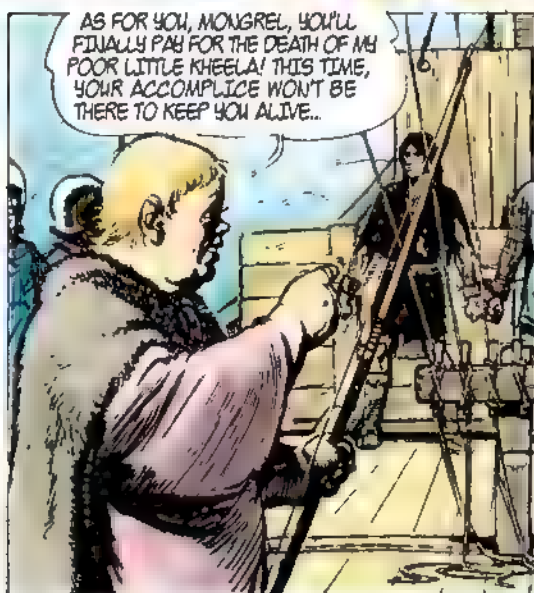
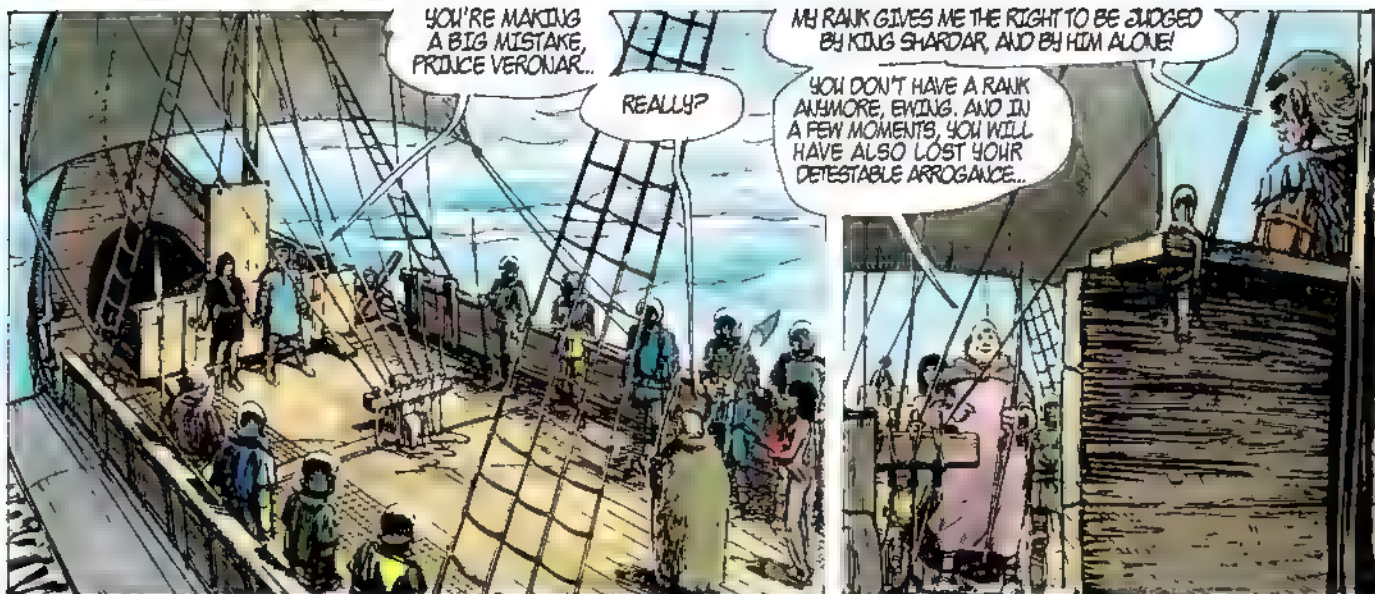


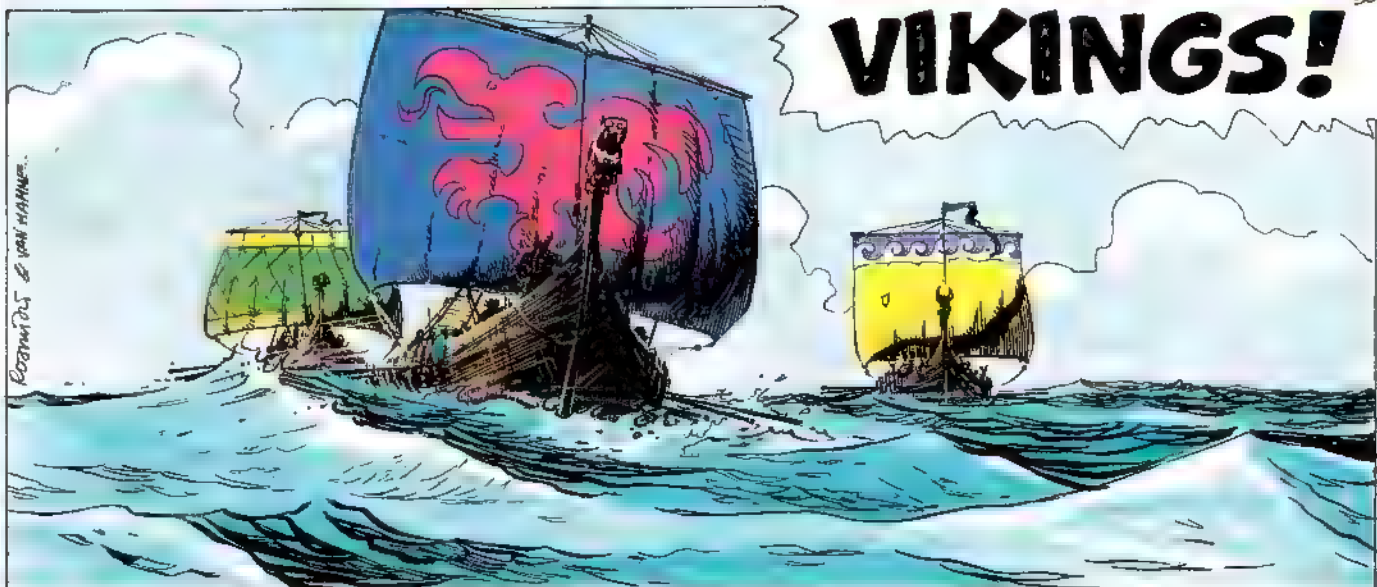
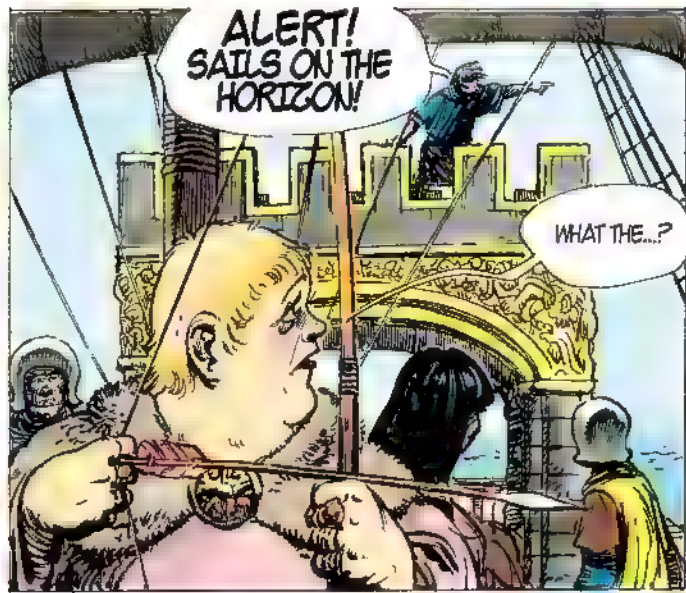
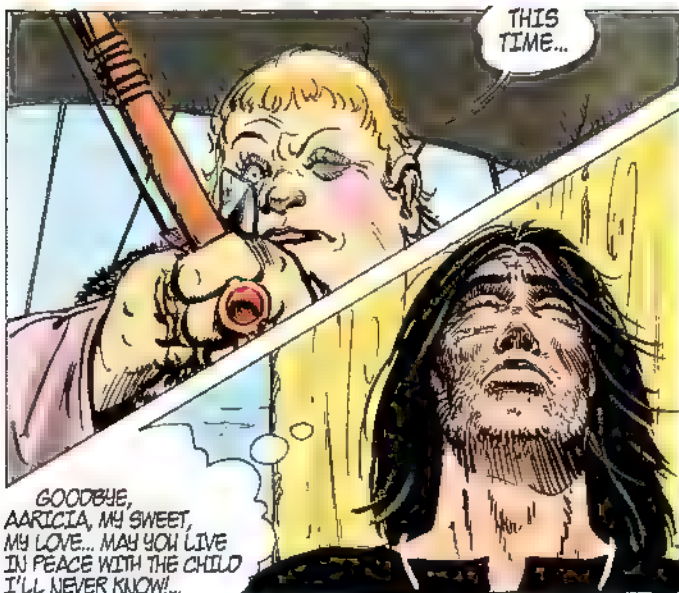
LOGIC SHARDAR IS GETTING OLD AND VERONAR, HIS HEIR, IS A CRUEL, NARROW-MINDED CRETIN WHO HATES ME. AS SOON AS HE'S IN POWER, HE'LL GET RID OF ME. I HAVE TO BE ON GALATHORN'S SIDE, THORGAL. HELP ME AND YOU WILL BE FREE... AND RICH!

THAT'S ALL I NEEDED TO HEAR...

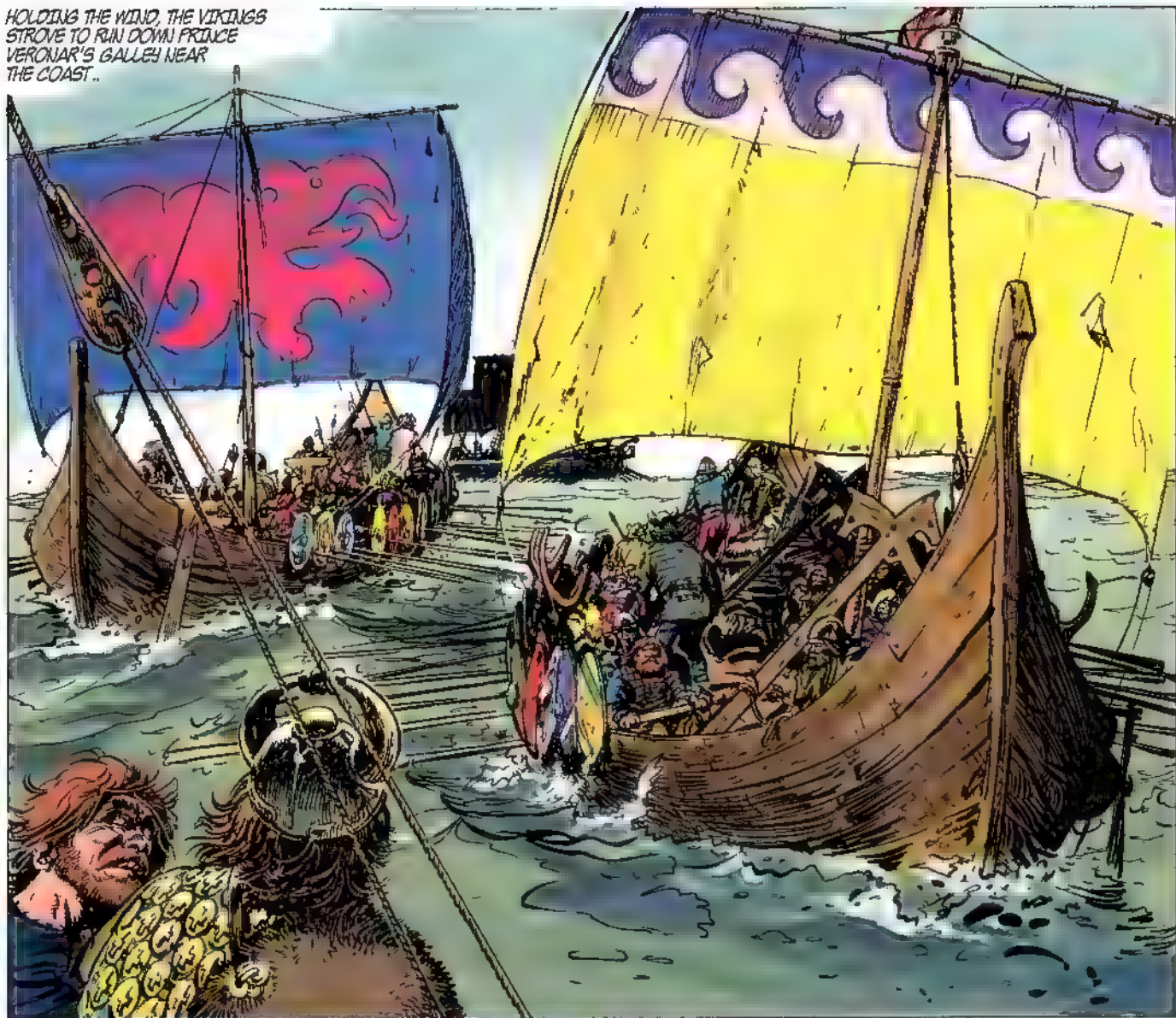
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS TREASON WITH YOUR LIFE, EARL EWING. AND I'LL TAKE A GREAT AMOUNT OF PLEASURE IN EXECUTING YOU MYSELF.







HOLDING THE WIND, THE VIKINGS
STROVE TO RUN DOWN PRINCE
VERONAR'S GALLEY NEAR
THE COAST..



THESE PIRATES SEEM TO BE
QUITE STUPID... OUR GALLEY
IS THE FASTEST VESSEL ON ALL
THE SEAS AND WE'LL OUTFIN
THEM LIKE LAST TIME. BRING
UP THE RHYTHM EVEN MORE,
CAPTAIN!

YES,
MY LORD.
AND THE
PRISONERS?





THEY HAVE ONLY WON A BRIEF REPRIEVE. I'LL SORT THEM OUT AS SOON AS OUR PURSUERS ARE OUT OF SIGHT.



DON'T MOVE. THEY CARE MORE ABOUT THE DRAKKARS THAN US RIGHT NOW. THESE VIKINGS HAVE TO SEIZE THE GALLEY, EWING. IT'S OUR BEST HOPE FOR SURVIVAL.



WE'RE ALREADY BREAKING AWAY. SHAME... I'D RATHER HAVE BEEN KILLED BY THOSE VIKINGS THAN AT THE HANDS OF THIS VERONAR BUFFOON...

WITH A BIT OF COURAGE AND LUCK, WE WON'T BE KILLED BY ANYONE, EWING.

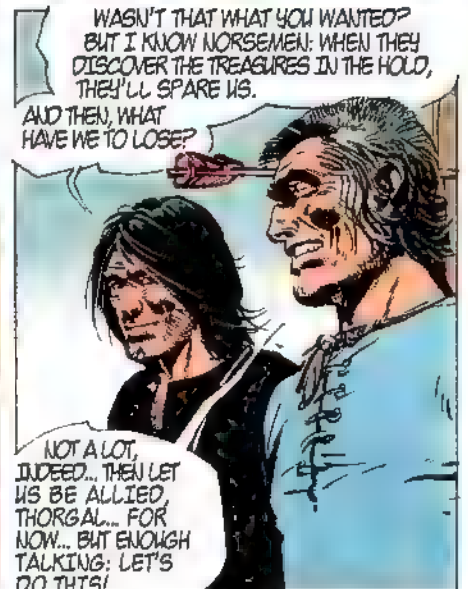


ONCE AGAIN, I ADMIRE YOUR RELENTLESSNESS TO NEVER ADMIT DEFEAT, THORGAL. BUT THIS TIME, REALLY... WHAT CAN YOU DO?

THIS, FOR A START...



LET'S DO IT, THEN! THOSE PIRATES WILL KILL US WITH THE OTHERS...



WASN'T THAT WHAT YOU WANTED? BUT I KNOW NORSEMEN: WHEN THEY DISCOVER THE TREASURES IN THE HOLD, THEY'LL SPARE US. AND THEN, WHAT HAVE WE TO LOSE?

NOT A LOT, INDEED... THEN LET US BE ALLIED, THORGAL... FOR NOW... BUT ENOUGH TALKING: LET'S DO THIS!



THE PRISONERS! THE PRISONERS ARE ESCAPING! STOP THEM!



ALL THE SOLDIERS ARE ON THE BRIDGE. IF WE MANAGE TO BLOCK THIS DOOR, WE'LL GAIN A FEW MINUTES RESPITE...





THAT'S GOING TO COST YOU A LOT, YOU ROTTER!



SOON YOU WILL CURSE THE GODS THAT YOU WERE BORN!



YOU...YOU...



VERONAR SLAVES, SOON YOU WILL BE FREE! FRIENDS ARE FOLLOWING US WHO WILL REMOVE YOUR CHAINS! LEAN ON YOUR OARS TO SLOW US DOWN...

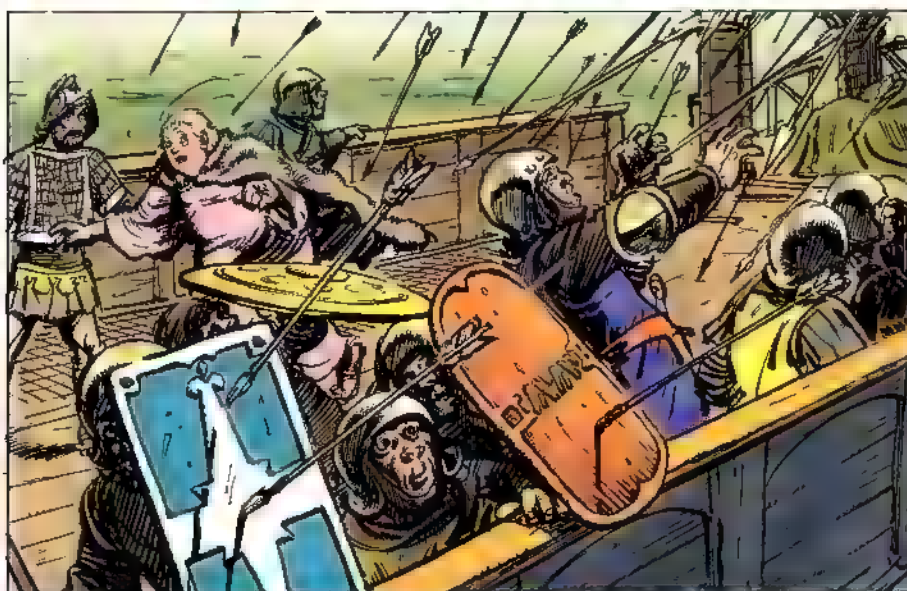
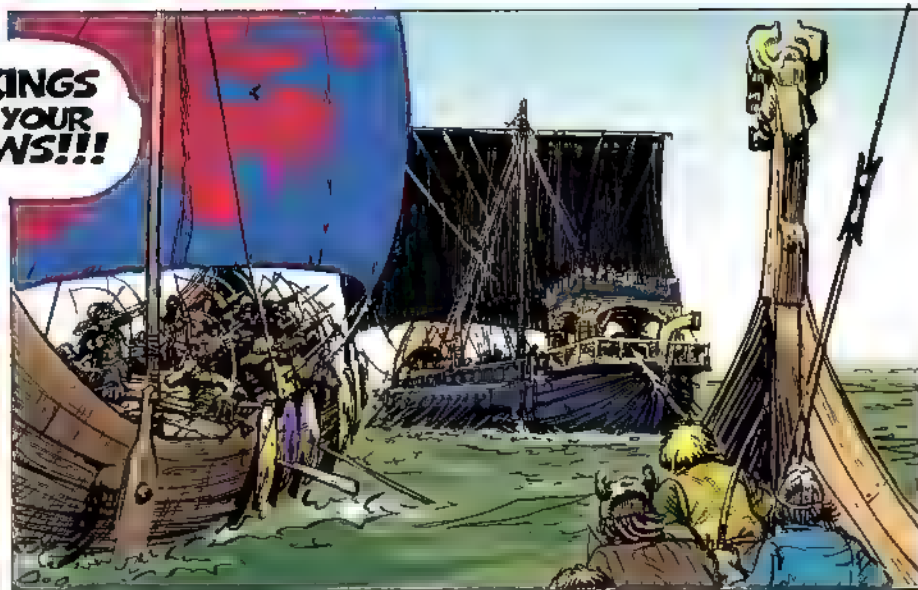


WHAT THE...? WHAT'S HAPPENING?...



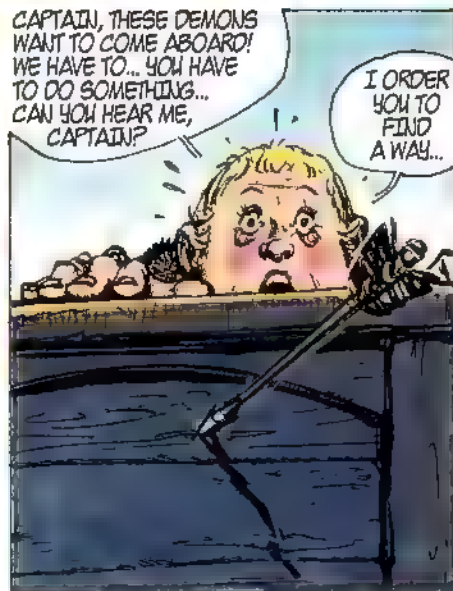
THEY'RE SLOWING
DOWN!... THIS TIME
WE'VE GOT THEM!

VIKINGS
TO YOUR
BOWS!!!

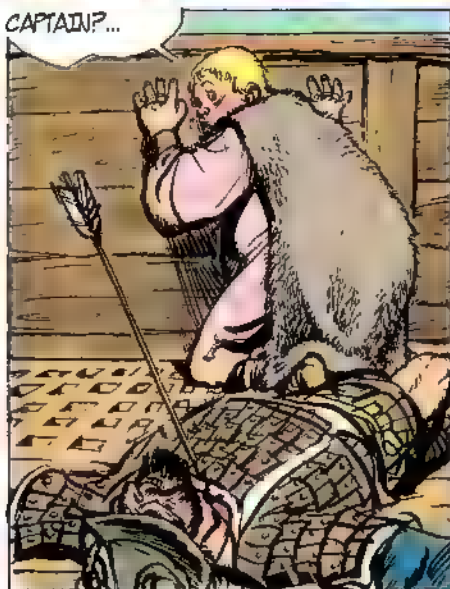


CAPTAIN, THESE DEMONS
WANT TO COME ABOARD!
WE HAVE TO... YOU HAVE
TO DO SOMETHING...
CAN YOU HEAR ME,
CAPTAIN?

I ORDER
YOU TO
FIND
A WAY...



CAPTAIN?...

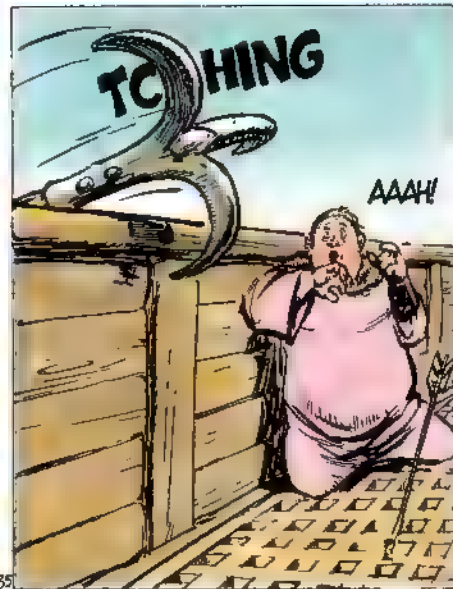


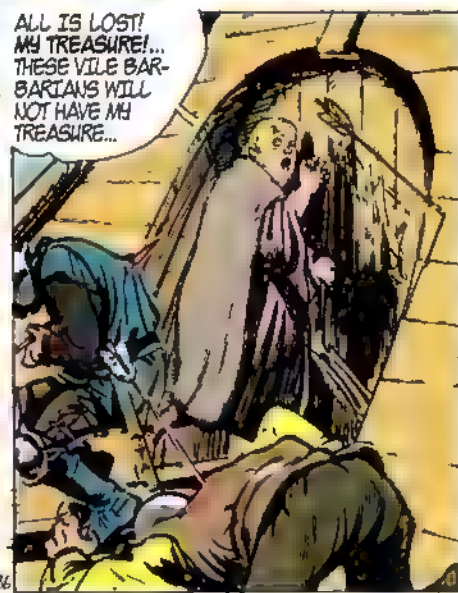
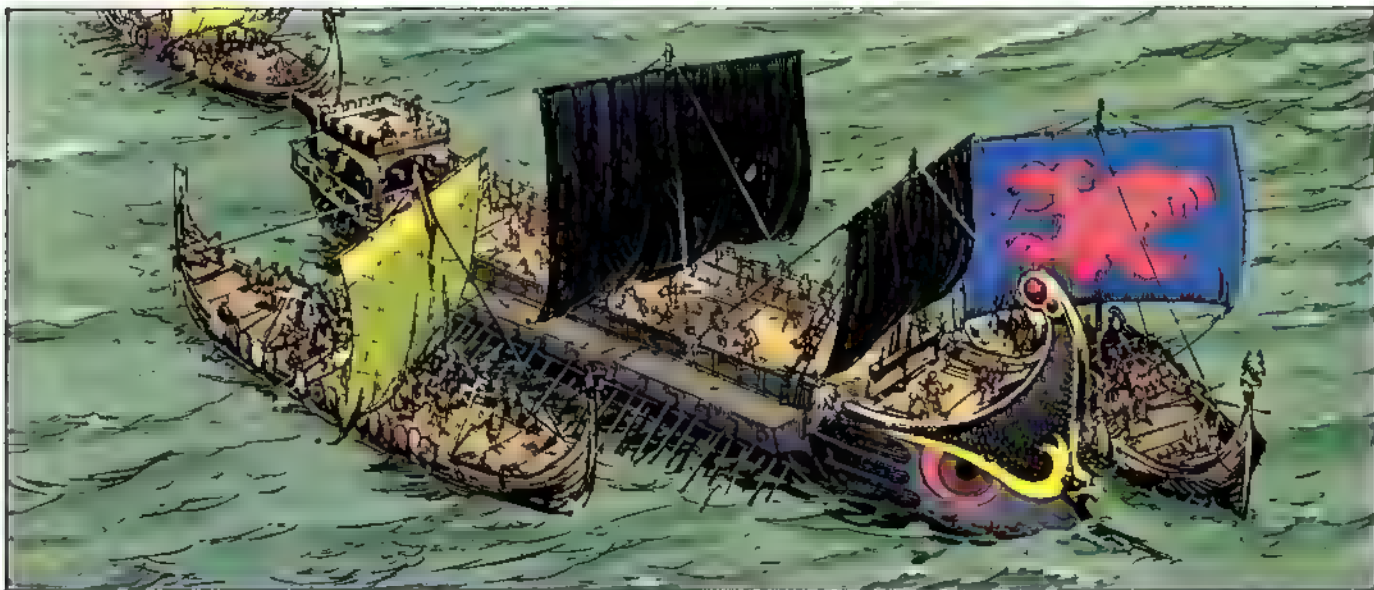
SOLDIERS,
SAVE ME! SAVE
YOUR PRINCE!...



TO HING

AAAAH!









SO YOU KNEW THAT THIS GALLEY WAS TRANSPORTING THE VASSALS' TRIBUTES TO KING SHARDAR?

OF COURSE...

WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO TRAP IT FOR YEARS, THIS ONE... AND THIS TIME, THANKS TO YOU, WE HAVE FINALLY SUCCEEDED. WE'RE RICH NOW, THORGAL.

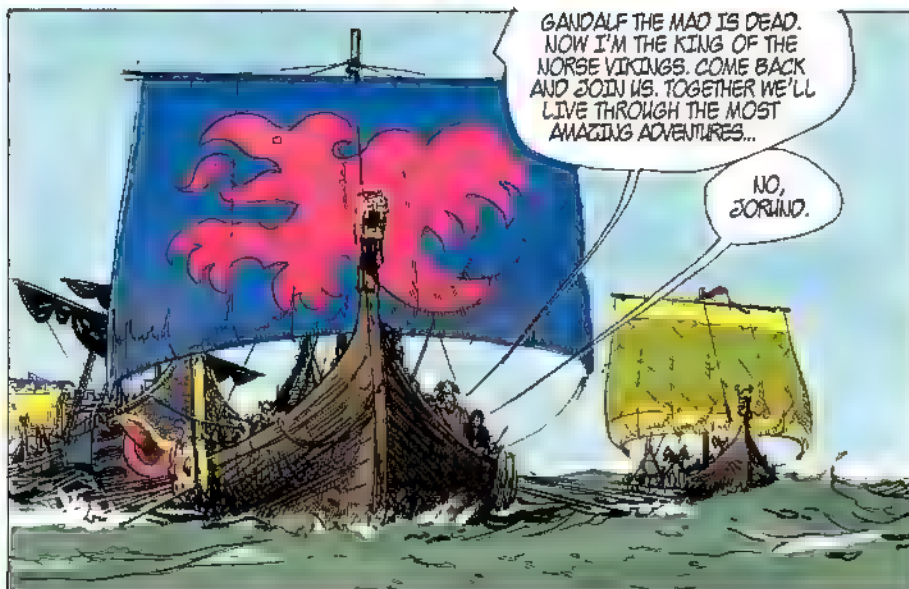
THANKS TO ME... AND ANOTHER MAN WHO HELPED ME, A JARL FROM SHARDAR'S COURT WHOM PRINCE VERONAR HAD CONDEMNED TO DEATH AT THE SAME TIME AS ME.

AND WHERE IS HE, THIS JARL, SO THAT I MAY KISS HIM?

HE DISAPPEARED... I WAS LOOKING FOR HIM IN VAIN AMONGST THE DEAD AND YOUR PRISONERS. I LOOKED EVERYWHERE...

HE UNDOUBTEDLY TRIED TO SWIM TO THE COAST. HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THAT TO RISKING BEING CAUGHT OR KILLED BY YOUR VIKINGS...

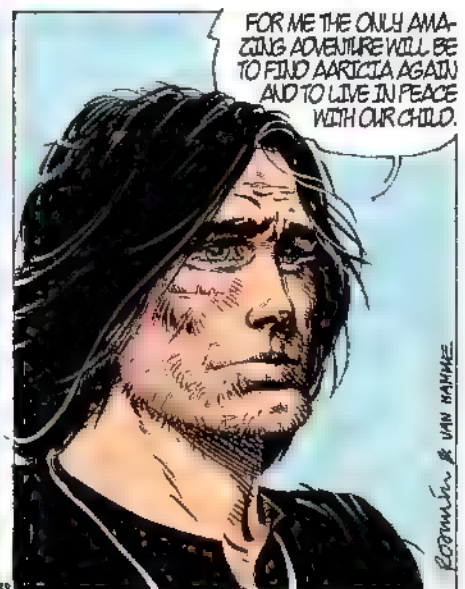
BAH, FORGET HIM! I HAVE AN OFFER TO MAKE YOU, THORGAL...



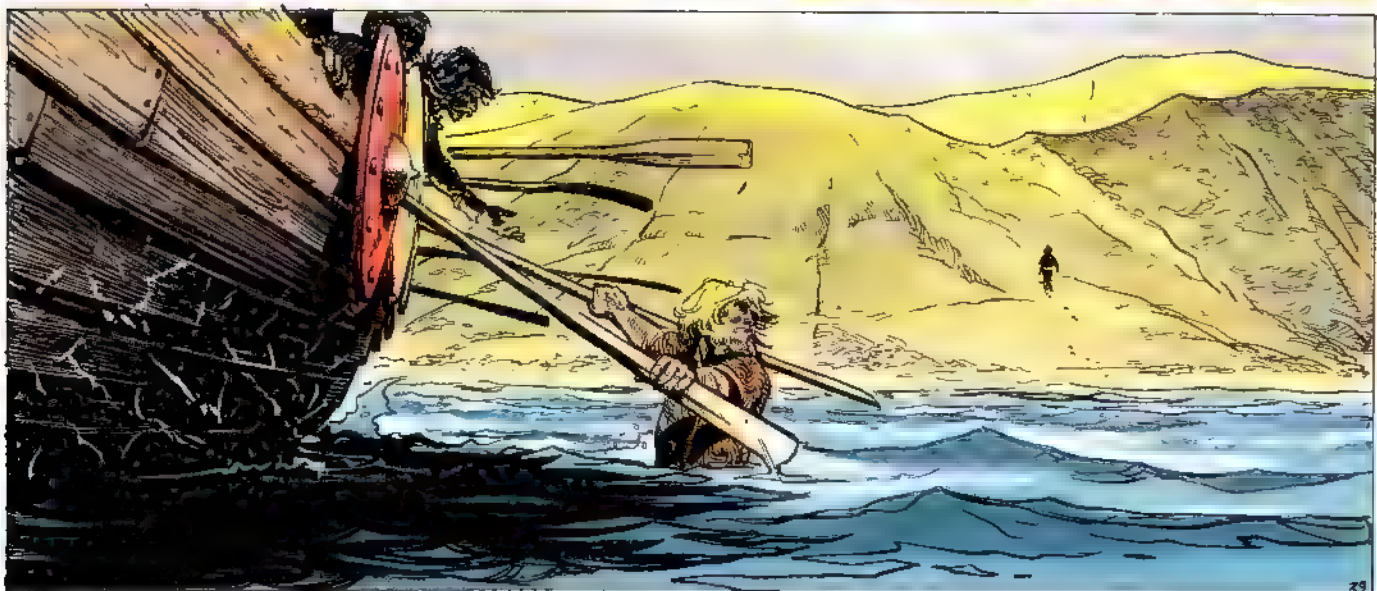
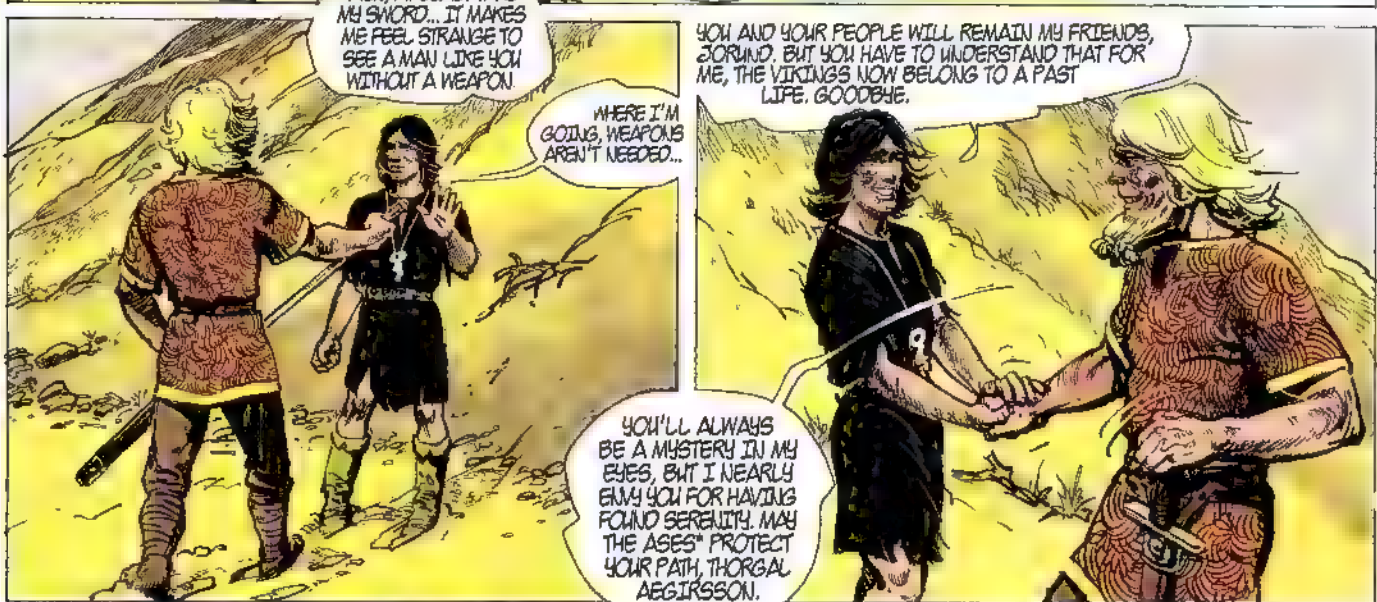
GANDALF THE MAD IS DEAD. NOW I'M THE KING OF THE NORSE VIKINGS. COME BACK AND JOIN US. TOGETHER WE'LL LIVE THROUGH THE MOST AMAZING ADVENTURES...

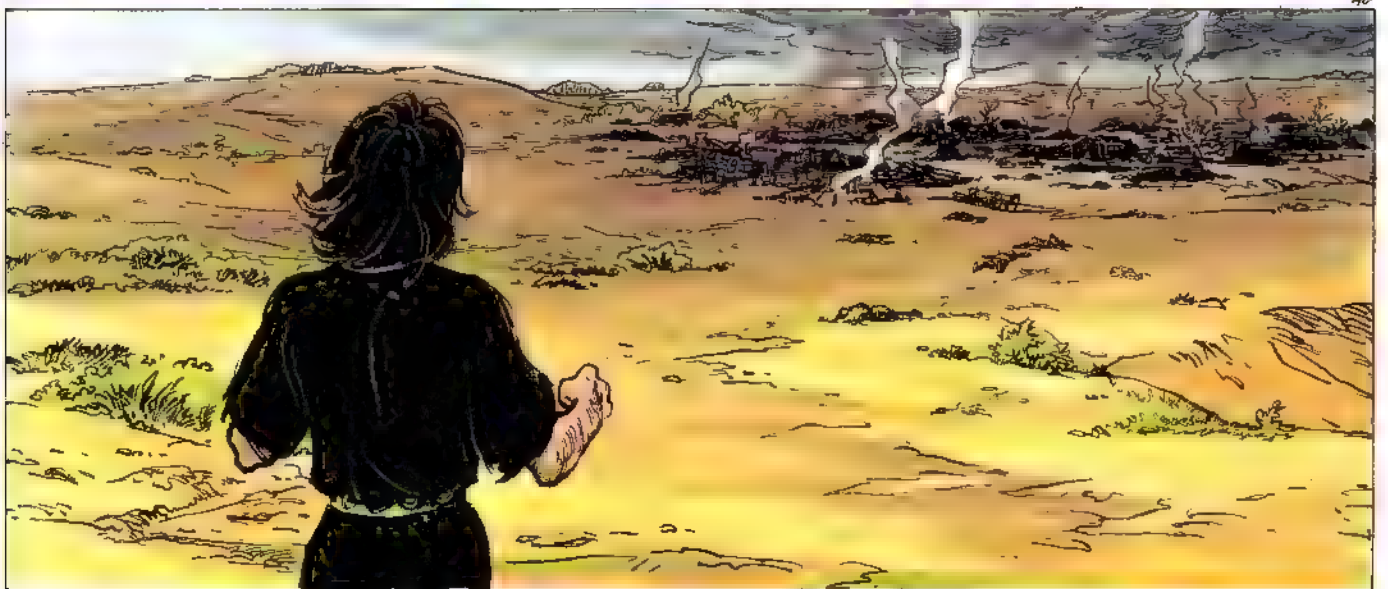
NO, JORUND.

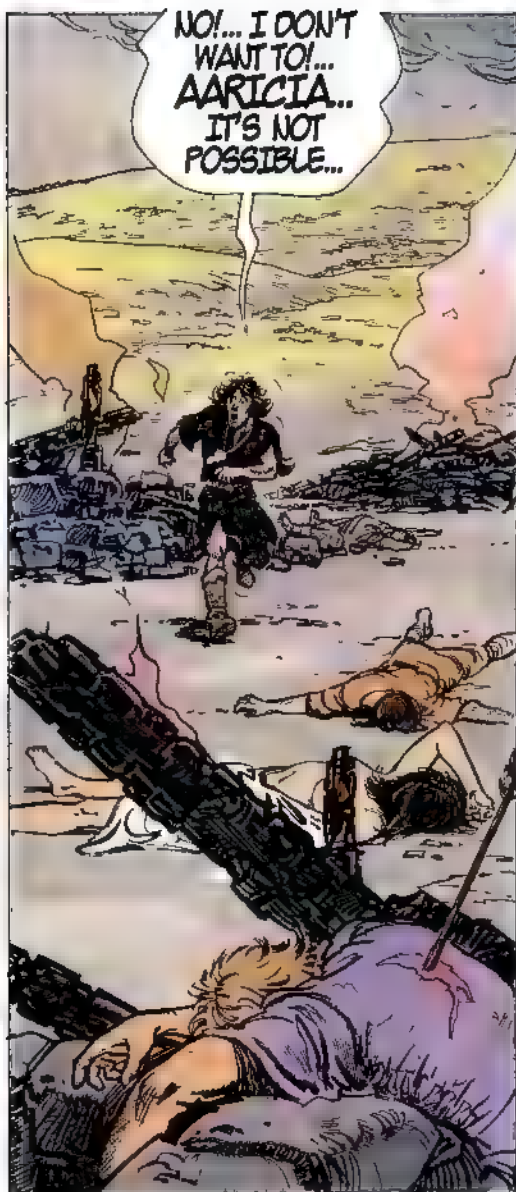
FOR ME THE ONLY AMAZING ADVENTURE WILL BE TO FIND AARICIA AGAIN AND TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH OUR CHILD.



ROOMIN & VAN HANKE







NO!... I DON'T
WANT TO!...
AARICIA...
IT'S NOT
POSSIBLE...

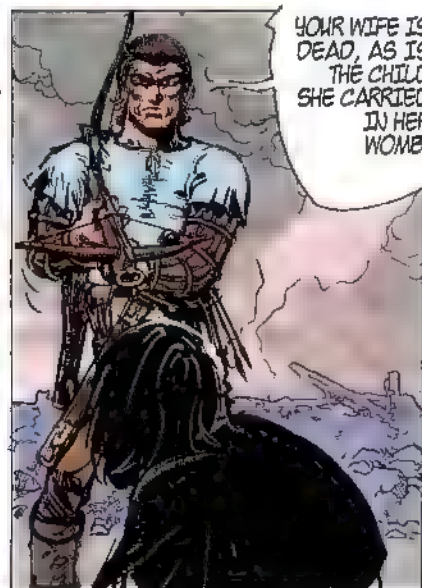


AARICIA!...
AARICIA!...

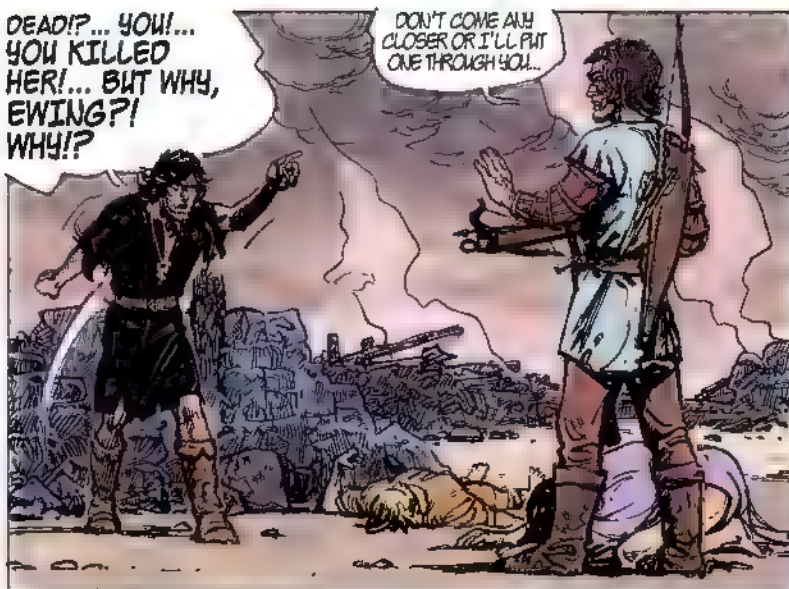


AARICIAAAA

THERE'S
NO USE,
THORGAL...



YOUR WIFE IS
DEAD, AS IS
THE CHILD
SHE CARRIED
IN HER
WOMB.



DEAD!?... YOW!...
YOU KILLED
HER!... BUT WHY,
EWING?!
WHY!?

DON'T COME ANY
CLOSER OR I'LL PUT
ONE THROUGH YOU...



AFTER HAVING SWIM BACK TO THE
COAST, I HIRED A FEW MERCENARIES
AND I CAME BACK HERE TO WAIT
FOR YOU. I KNEW I'D FIND YOU
HERE. BUT I SWEAR I DIDN'T
WANT YOUR WIFE TO DIE,
THORGAL. ON THE CONTRARY,
I ONLY WANTED TO TAKE
HER HOSTAGE TO
FORCE YOU TO
ALLY WITH ME...

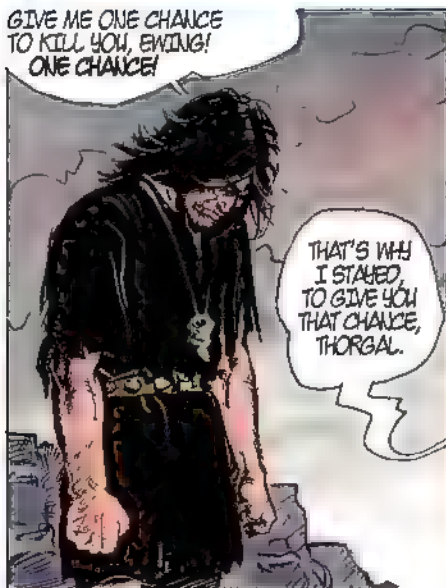
BUT I DIDN'T TAKE INTO ACCOUNT HER PRIDE AND HER COURAGE... RATHER THAN LET HERSELF BE CAPTURED, SHE PREFERRED TO THROW HERSELF INTO THE SEA. YOU HAD A WIFE WORTHY OF YOU, THORGAL.



WE LOOKED FOR HER IN VAIN FOR HOURS... WE DIDN'T EVEN FIND HER BODY. MY MEN WERE BRUTES WITHOUT GODS OR LAWS. THEY BURNT DOWN THE VILLAGE AS PAYMENT AND I LET THEM GO WITH THEIR SLIM REWARDS.

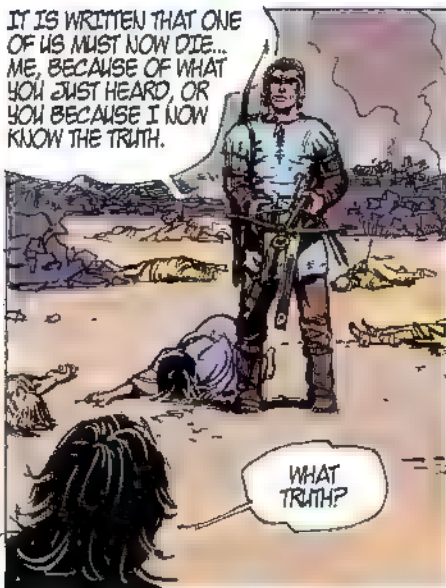


GIVE ME ONE CHANCE TO KILL YOU, EWING! ONE CHANCE!



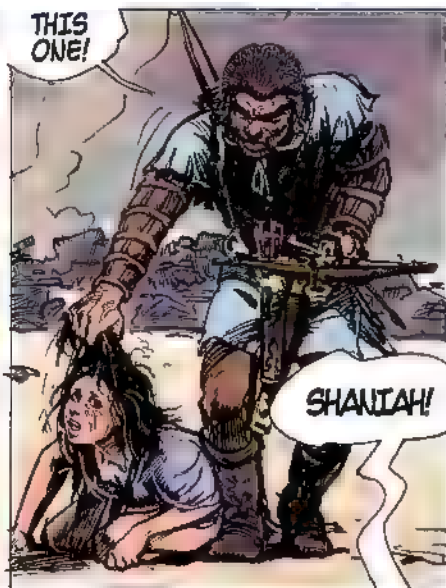
THAT'S WHY I STAYED TO GIVE YOU THAT CHANCE, THORGAL.

IT IS WRITTEN THAT ONE OF US MUST NOW DIE... ME, BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU JUST HEARD, OR YOU BECAUSE I NOW KNOW THE TRUTH.



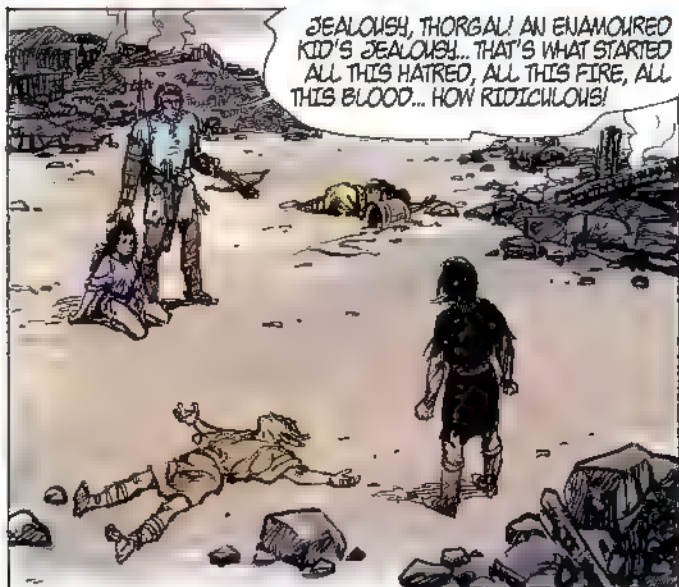
WHAT TRUTH?

THIS ONE!



SHANTIAH!

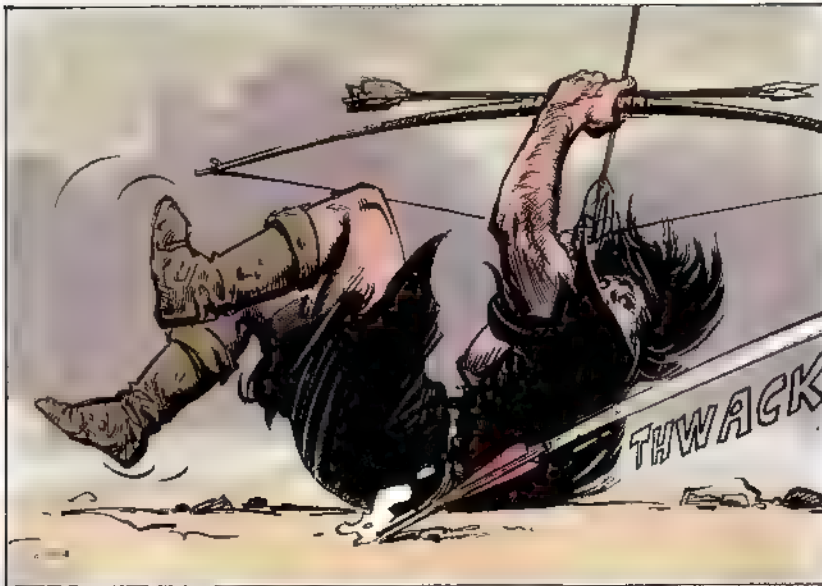
JEALOUSY, THORGAL! AN ENAMOURED KID'S JEALOUSY... THAT'S WHAT STARTED ALL THIS HATRED, ALL THIS FIRE, ALL THIS BLOOD... HOW RIDICULOUS!



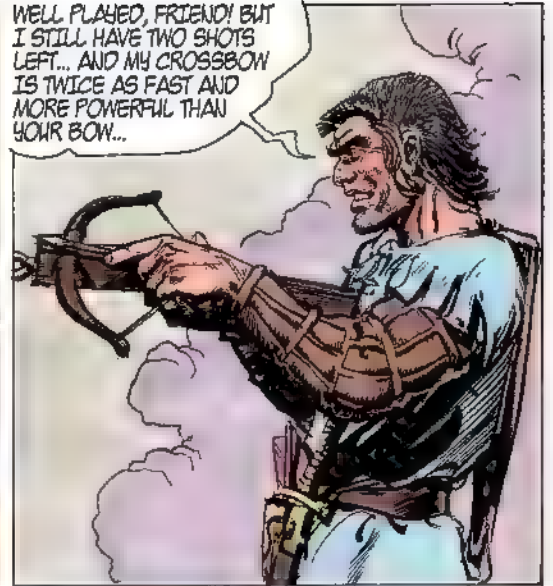
AND IF WE ARE GOING TO FIGHT, IT WILL STILL BE BECAUSE OF HER... BUT THEN, THE SURVIVOR WILL KILL THIS WRETCH WHO SHOULD NEVER HAVE HAD THE RIGHT TO BE BORN.







WELL PLAYED, FRIEND! BUT I STILL HAVE TWO SHOTS LEFT... AND MY CROSSBOW IS TWICE AS FAST AND MORE POWERFUL THAN YOUR BOW...



YOU LAUGH TOO SOON, EWING.

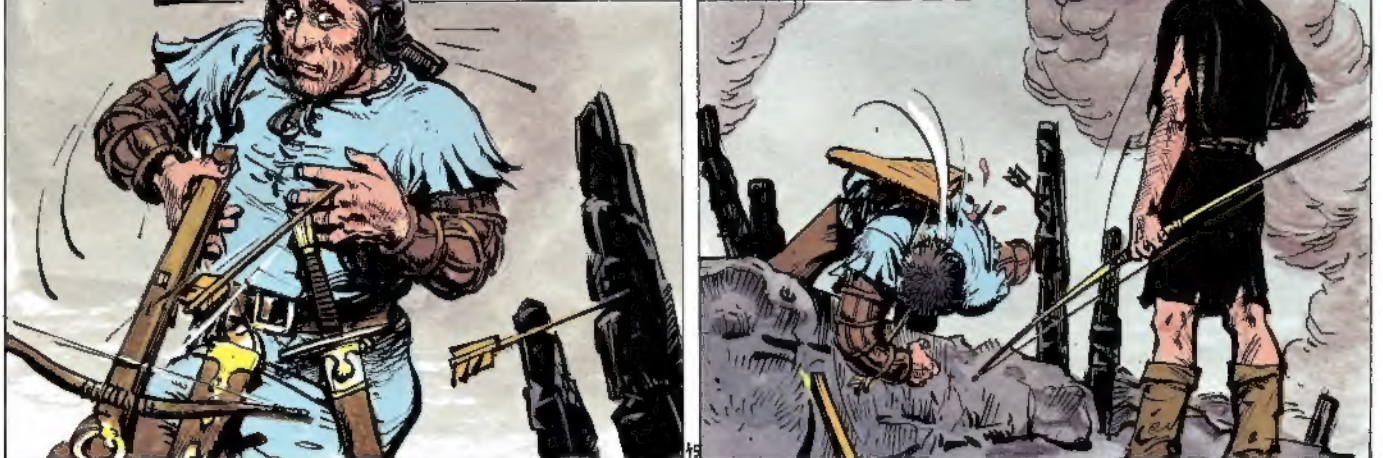
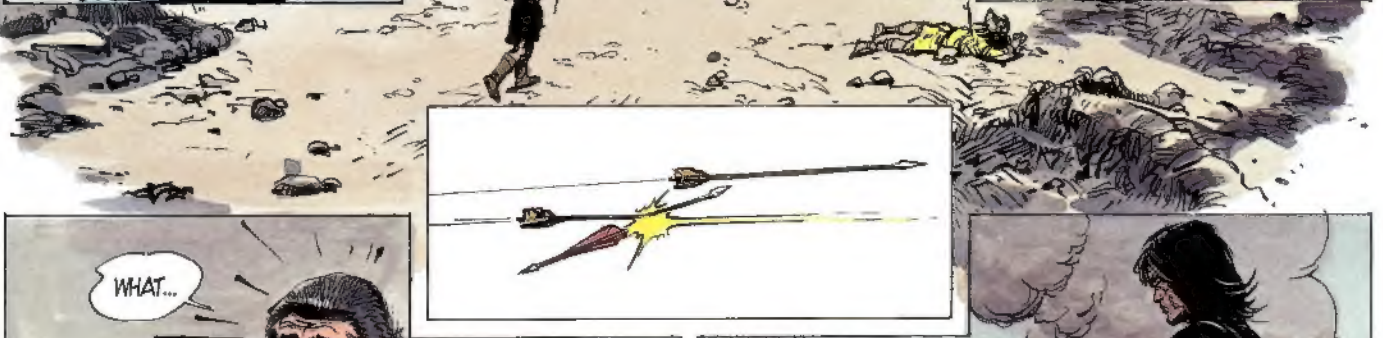
THUD

HE'S RIGHT: THIS FOREIGN WEAPON HAS A DEVILISH PRECISION, ESPECIALLY AT THIS DISTANCE. I'VE ONLY GOT ONE WAY TO MAKE HIM REVEAL HIMSELF... MAY THOR GUIDE MY ARM!



MY LAST SHOT! I'LL HAVE TO... WHAT'S HE DOING? IS HE MAD?



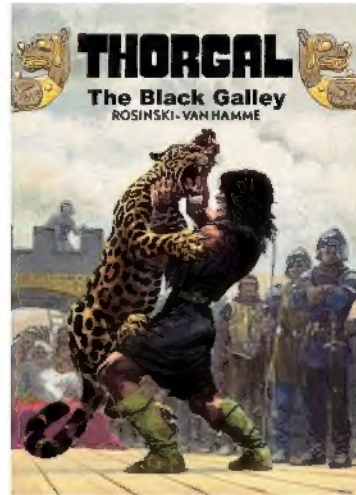




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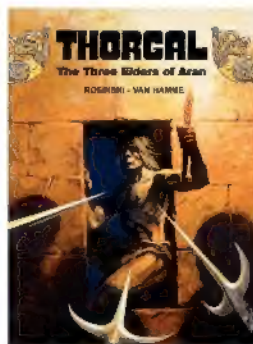
THORGAL

THE GODS HAVE PUT A MAN TO THE TEST

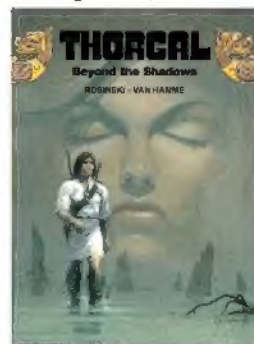
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